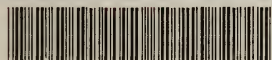


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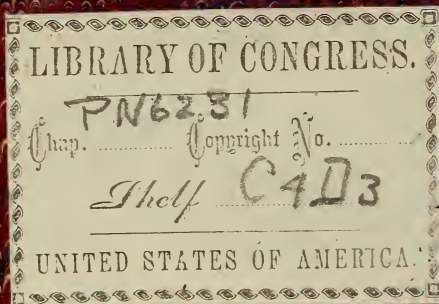
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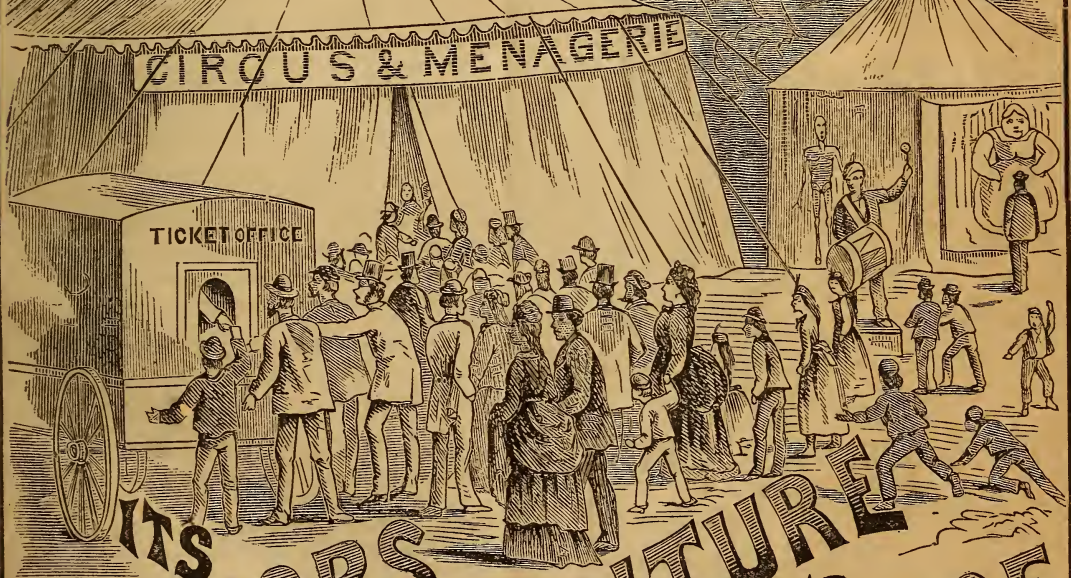


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NOTE No. 4792—THE TREASURER'S STORY.

IT was in the raw, chill Spring time, just before the tent shows took the road, at the time when fortunate advance agents and performers were "fixed" for the coming season. The speaker, the treasurer of a famous caravan, had in his hand a fresh, damp copy of a morning paper. He had just been reading the graphic account of a murder trial, and, as he dropped the sheet on his knee, he remarked to a group of professional people sitting about him:

"A strong case against him, but I never could assist in the conviction of a person on circumstantial evidence alone, no matter how apparently indisputable were the circumstances pointing out the guilty.

"It makes me shudder at the thought of an innocent person suffering the ignominy and torture of confinement. How many such are even now incarcerated who are as well entitled to breathe Heaven's pure air as ourselves? It was years ago, boys, when I was a little liveher with my digits than I am now; and when I think I could have rivaled Ben. Lusbie, the lightning manipulator of the pasteboard. We were showing in a manufacturing town, and I well remember the contractor had considerable difficulty in securing a license. The mill people only worked fourteen and sixteen hours a day, and many of them were children who had better been at their book than wearing out their young lives at the drudge work. The afternoon show was 'light,' for it is the country people who patronize the day show. Ticket selling was slow, and from not being occupied I was looking about more than usual, and I now recollect that I noticed a couple of official-looking individuals, whom I at once took to be officers of the law, carefully scanning all who entered the tent or approached the ticket wagon. At length one of the individuals, who carried a thick stick, as if he expected to encounter some irate individual bent upon personal violence, exclaimed in a husky whisper, at the same time betraying considerable perturbation: 'Terrible murder, Squire. I'm looking for the chap as did it. Razor—throat cut from ear to ear—money missing.' I expressed surprise, and indicated that I was desirous of learning the particulars. He shook his head and placed his hand upon his lips to imply silence, at the same time pantomimically pointing to a youth of fifteen, who passed up a two dollar note. As I was about to return his change with a ticket, the watcher pounced upon the lad as would a hawk upon a dove. 'I arrest you for murder!' exclaimed the constable, giving the boy a fierce shake, as if to then and there punish him for the heinous crime with which he was charged. The youth turned fiercely upon the officer, and said with an earnestness, and withal a ananliness which I shall never forget:



"'What do you mean, sir, by this? I consider this no joke.'

"'No joke,' exclaimed the constable, who had by this time been joined by his fellow officer and a crowd of hangers-on, attracted by the scene. 'Joke! I should say it was no joke,' said he, throttling the boy until he was black in the face. 'Do you call it a joke to murder your poor, old uncle?'

"'Uncle—mur-dered!' stammered the boy, blanching and staggering at the intelligence, and instantaneously bursting into tears.

"'Look at the young hypocrite vagabones sniveling,' remarked the second officer.

"'A bystander made a very uncomplimentary remark in regard to the murdered man, declaring him to have been a brute as well as a miser, and further, that it were a pity that his head had not been severed from his body long before, at which both officials frowned menacingly and gave their prisoner an extra twist in their vice-like grasp.

"'Make a memmyrandum of that note, Butkins,' suggested the first constable to the second, and taking it from my hand he wrote 'two dollar bill, Falls Mills Bank, No. 4792,' and returned it to me with an injunction to keep it separate from my receipts, as it would be necessary to produce it at the examination, which would take place the next day.

"'This exciting occurrence hurt the afternoon house at least fifty dollars, as a crowd of idlers who would have ultimately surrendered their half dollars and quarters to the enticingly seductive strains of Prof. Kleib's Opera Band, followed off the culprit and his captors, leaving me idle in the ticket wagon.

"'By supper time an intense excitement prevailed throughout the town, and the wonders and attractions of our great consolidation were for a time forgotten in the all-absorbing topic of the hour. Coming out from the dining room, after supper, I was served with a subpoena to appear at the investigation the next morning. Of course it would be very inconvenient for me to remain behind, but it was my duty, and, besides, the law demanded it.

"'The next morning the local weekly appeared, issued two days in advance of its usual date, and containing a highly colored account of the homicide, headed in display type:

'A NEPHEW KILLS HIS UNCLE TO GO TO THE CIRCUS.'

"'Somehow that caption roused my ire, and I immediately espoused the cause of the boy and began to look upon him as a victim of circumstances. I confess to being over sensitive to inuendoes or reflections tending to injure our calling.

"'All the town magnates were convened at the justice's office long before nine o'clock, the appointed hour. The boy sat between the two constables, in front of the squire's desk, the picture of distress, and shared with me the dark and threatening glances of the loungers who had forsaken their accustomed haunt—the tavern.

"'I'll cut the story as short as I can and give you the pith of it. It appeared that the murdered uncle was a miser who had lived secluded at the edge of the town for many years. The story went that the death of a wid-

owed sister, who had for some years resided with him, had changed him from a liberal, cheery man, to that of a cold, hard misanthrope, whose only end and aim seemed to be the accumulation of money. As years rolled on he had waxed rich and grown the more sordid and secluded. The only occupants of the farm house were himself and nephew. A dismal, strange home it was for the boy, who had grown up a shy chap, as singular, almost, as his uncle. The uncle was oft accused of penurious meanness toward the son of his dead sister, and at times they had been known to quarrel and bandy hot words, all of which were now called to mind and retailed again and again.

"'For all that their relations were none of the pleasantest, they were almost inseparable. The uncle was a very methodical man, as most misers are; and lying upon his desk in the living room was found a series of daily entries of all his transactions—the loaning of money, the collection of rents, the recording and foreclosing of mortgages. To such an extreme was this carried that he even noted the numbers of the bank bills in his possession, and he could at any time have shown the number of every bond, share of stock and bank note in his possession. He was not, it is true, accustomed to keeping much cash on hand, as he had a terror of being robbed, and frequently gave out that he deposited daily.

"'The book was examined by the justice, and there, upon its page, was the damning evidence—the proof of the unnatural nephew's crime. It read: 'July 21, \$2, Falls Mills Bank, No. 4792,' and the entry, as the date showed, had been made the very day of the murder. The fussy, snuffy lawyer who had volunteered his services in behalf of the friendless lad, seemed completely dumbfounded. There was not a shadow of a doubt that the pale, frightened youth was guilty. The case was unceremoniously sent up to the higher court, the indictment found, and with that the crowd broke for the door to detail to the outsiders what had transpired within.

"'In murder cases, where the evidence is entirely circumstantial, there is always a theory. In this case it was this: The nephew wanted money to go to the circus; he had been refused by the miser. Intent on gratifying his curiosity, he had watched his opportunity to obtain the money by foul means. His uncle had made the entry in the book and perhaps fallen asleep with the note in his hand, the lad had stolen behind him, and with one sweep severed the great artery, taking his life instantaneously, while the keen blade had almost severed the head from the body.

"'The tavern-keeper filed a bond for my appearance at the ensuing trial, and I rejoined the show and resumed my financial duties; but not until I had interviewed the fussy and snuffy attorney and explained to him the disadvantages of my being recalled to a trial during the season while we were traveling. I gave him a liberal fee and instructed him to keep off the trial until the next winter; and at the same time suggesting that in the meantime something might lift the load of guilt and obloquy that now weighed down the unfortunate youth.

"'I fear not,' returned the venerable man of the law. 'I never undertook a more hopeless case in my life. His youth is the only thing that I can urge for clemency.



NOTE 4792. "THE MOONLIGHT FELL UPON THE BLOOD-STAINS."

He is guilty, without a doubt; but I pledge you my word, sir, that I shall do all that can be done.' And he continued somewhat proudly, 'I have practiced going on these thirty years at the bar, and never neglected my duty either to my client or the law.'

"I went away hurriedly, regretting that I had not interviewed the youth in the solitude of his cell, and to make amends, I wrote a note saying that he should not be entirely forsaken at his trial; for I had not yet forgotten the head lines of the newspaper, and every time I recalled them my blood grew hot and I felt an unexplainable sympathy for the friendless prisoner.

"Why should I have sympathy for a murderer? The more I thought of it and the more I argued and reasoned within me, the greater and more intense interest I felt in the boy criminal.

"A strange fancy took possession of my brain. I began to scrutinize every two dollar note that passed through my hands. In my sleep murderers went about passing two dollar bills. Every man with a two dollar bill was a murderer. I almost trembled at the sight of a two dollar note for fear that I might be called upon to swear away the life of some youth full of hope and anticipation of the world before him.

"I became exceedingly nervous. I made repeated blunders in selling tickets and handling of money; for there, right before the window of the wagon, were murderers of their uncles with two dollar notes.

"It was one night in the Fall—cheerless, cold and rainy—I recollect it well. I was perfectly unfit for my duties. I had grown thin and haggard—the murderer of his uncle was fast killing me.

"There was a multitude about the ticket window in spite of the unpropitious weather. From the many money-filled hands thrust forward for tickets I pulled—a two dollar note, Falls Mills Bank, and, sure as Heaven, there were the figures 4792. There could be no mistake. I crushed the note into my vest pocket. I grew alternately hot and cold with excitement; I bungled and dropped tickets for the balance of that night. I was like a man in a trance.

"The second note, No. 4792, would save the boy's life. I wrote the old lawyer to bring on the trial at the earliest possible moment. Come what would I would be there; and, without divulging the nature of my discoveries, I wrote that I had learned that which would at least save the boy's life.

"The trial came on and the evidence for the prosecution was essentially the same as at the preliminary examination. Witnesses were brought to prove the hard words that from time to time disturbed the quietude of the miser's home, and every circumstance pointed to the nephew as the murderer. The story and the theory was developed by the district attorney and his witnesses.

"Then the hopeless case was called for the defense, and the venerable attorney, after taking a most prodigious pinch of snuff, and turning to the parties addressed, remarked:

"I believe, your honor and gentlemen of the jury, that the two dollar note, which the youth was detected in passing at the ticket wagon of the circus, was upon the

Falls Mills Bank of this town, and number 4792.' Pausing for a moment, and taking from the table before him an envelope, and removing therefrom a bank note, he resumed: 'In my hand I hold a two dollar note on the same institution, the number of which is 4792. Is that any evidence that I am the murderer? Is the two dollar note, No. 4792, in possession of the government, any proof that this guileless boy—for I believe him such—committed this shocking homicide?'

"A great hush came over the assembly. The prisoner leaned forward, intense interest and surprise pictured on every lineament of his young face. The judge dropped his spectacles, while the district attorney bounded out of his seat and quickly returned to it. The jury looked from one to another in amazement. The prosecuting officer and judge and jury examined the bank note. There was no mistaking the fact. It was a two dollar bill on the Falls Mills Bank, and the number was 4792.

"The president of the bank was then called in behalf of the defence. He testified to the fact that there was in circulation four two dollar notes numbered 4792. He explained that the bank issued four series of numbers, designated by the letters A, B, C and D. The note passed by the youth was of the series A, and that exhibited by the attorney for the prisoner of series C—B and D still being in circulation.

"From that moment the government abandoned all hope of convicting the prisoner, and the trial resulted in a disagreement of jury.

"I will clear him,' exclaimed the old lawyer, jubilantly, as we walked away from the court room. 'In fact,' he added, 'I think the trial would have resulted in an acquittal were it not that the murder is still fresh in the minds of every one. The boy's case will grow stronger every day now, and I only regret that you have been so precipitate in urging the trial.'

"I returned to the show, but not without interviewing the youth in whose fate I had become so much interested. He protested his innocence, and I believed him.

"When the show broke up, I returned to Falls Mills and took up my residence at the tavern. I don't know what determined me to winter there, but I was impelled to do so. I cultivated a general acquaintance with the townspeople, and was in the habit, of an evening, to call upon one or the other of my new found friends. One night, intending to return to the tavern, my mind occupied with a variety of subjects that had formed the theme of our evening chat, I walked in the opposite direction, and before I noted my blunder, I was at the edge of the town and at the doorstep of the deserted house wherein had been committed the murder.

"I had observed during the trial that no razor or knife had been exhibited in court as the bloody weapon with which the deed had been perpetrated; and as I stood there, at midnight, in the biting cold, the fact impressed itself upon me that the murdered man wore a full beard and never shaved. 'Did he have a razor in the house?' I asked myself the question, and before I could answer it I had, with a sudden impulse, raised one of the windows and crawled into the very room in which the mur-

der was committed. The dark spot on the carpet told me that. The moonlight fell upon the blood stains, and with a shudder I was about to withdraw through the window; but throwing off all fear and superstitious feeling, I closed the window and seated myself near the blood spot on the carpet, repeating to myself: 'He was killed with a razor.' I had no evidence of the fact, but it was part of the theory.

"I forgot the cold—I forgot the dread spot where I sat—but I kept revolving in my mind, 'he was killed with a razor.'

"All night I sat there deeply pondering, and when daylight came I commenced my search. The premises had been undisturbed since the murder, and things remained as they were before he was so suddenly and mysteriously ushered out of existence.

"At last, in an old-fashioned, many-drawered bureau, I found a razor. It was a very old-fashioned one, and the initials of its former owner were roughly etched upon the handle. It was bright and unstained—not even touched with rust. I pursued my investigations further, and critically examined all the table cutlery in the house, and continued my search for razors; but no more were to be found. I left everything as I found it and returned to the hotel, remarking in answer to an inquiry, that I had spent an evening with a friend.

"After supper I went to the barber's for a shave. In front of me, beside the mirror, was a roughly constructed frame for holding in place the razors of the barber. I counted the number of places intended for the razors to rest in, and without thought, remarked aloud: 'Eight razors!' The barber gave a start, which cut my face, and I noticed that his hand trembled violently. A terrible and startling suspicion flashed upon me. Why his perturbation? I looked—there was six razors in the frame and one in his hand. Where was the eighth razor? A clammy sweat oozed through my pores. Did he read my thoughts? He might cut my throat!

"I thanked God when I got out of that chair. I went away not half knowing what I said. I was on the trail; I felt it.

"The next day I interviewed the prisoner. Did he ever know of any business transactions between his uncle and the barber? I was hunting for a motive—I had a theory to substantiate. He did. The barber owed a note of long standing, and oft postponed payment. In fact, they had almost come to blows in regard to it.

"I returned to the deserted house and resumed my search. Unrewarded, cold and disappointed, I leaned against the well curb.

"The well! I dashed into the house, forcing the illy-fastened door in my excitement and haste, and brought out a mirror. I held it so that the sun's rays reflected on the mirror the bottom of the well. I scanned the mirror intently. It was there pictured upon the surface of the tell-tale glass—I saw the distinct outline of a razor. I knew it all now. That razor had been the instrument of murder. I returned the mirror to the house and turned toward the town. Irresistibly I was drawn toward the barber's shop. It was filled with customers,

and I seated myself to glance over a paper and study my man. I noticed that as he changed a dull razor for another of a keener edge, he, from habit, placed the one he had last been using in the pistol pocket of his pants instead of returning it to the rack. I now remembered that I had often seen him at the tavern—frequently with a razor in the same pocket, the handle protruding.

"He had a discussion about the unpaid note, and to obtain possession of it he had murdered the old man. Such were my thoughts. I dropped the paper and looked the barber full in the eye and asked:

"'Where is that other razor?' The sudden question made him cling to the chair at his side for support. He turned alternately white and red. I stepped between him and said: 'The other razor is where you threw it—in the well. You cut his throat to obtain possession of that note!'

"'It's a lie!' he gasped, trying to brave it out.

"'It is true!' I exclaimed, brandishing an old contract, which had the appearance of a legal document, 'and I arrest you for murder!'

"The razor fell from his hand—the bravado was all gone. He was the guilty man. The shock was too much for his system—he fainted. Restored to consciousness, the pitiable wretch begged for mercy and imploringly cried: 'Oh, don't hang me! Don't hang me!' Then, in a frenzy, he sprang up, exclaiming: 'I did it. I did it. The boy is innocent!' And before any one could guess his purpose, he grasped a razor from the rack before him, and with one terrible sweep across his throat, let out his life.

"The youth still lives at Falls Mills, an honored citizen, and his parlor hangs a frame, in which is the two dollar note, Falls Mills Bank, No. 4792, series A, while I carry to this day the two dollar note, series C, Falls Mills Bank, No. 4792."

"ON THE ROAD."

"Hoop la!"

Spring time has come for the benefit of "Gentle Annie" and the public at large, the winter's snow has melted, and the roads are knee deep with the mud. Those gentlemen who have been watching for "sleepers" all winter about the faro table, uniformed in a fur collar and a linen duster, group where the genial rays of the sun shine is warmest, and return thanks that they have survived, and pray that they may continue to exist until straw hats are again generally worn.

Roll out the bill wagon and the paste wagon in the glory of their new paint; load in the gorgeous posters, the wordy programmes, handsome lithographs and illuminated cards. Supply the agents with abundance of contract blanks, give the press agent his cuts, and instruct him to make the columns of the newspapers as flowery as the hillsides in the coming May, and as gorgeous as the tinted heavens of an autumnal sunset. Fit the new paste brushes to their handles, lay in a stock of starch and tacks, and don't charge the manager a cent of profit thereon. Fetch out the horses and hitch up; I am

anxious to see the first stand of bills for the season posted. Slap on the paste with a will, bluster your hands, all together, boys, this is the best show on the road, and we are the bosses in the business!

Opposition stand aside and clear the track, the grandest combination of the universe is on wheels. Never was the little old man who directs the posting more in his element, and he sits upon his bill wagon shouting his orders like a colonel of militia in a sham fight. How the paste flies over the heads of the men into the faces of the lookers-on. You never saw the Splinter? Why, he is a sight worth seeing; he is built on the plan of a clothes-



"ON THE ROAD."—"THE SPLINTER."

pin, and is as graceful as a turkey walking on a hot grid-iron; his arms flap in the Spring gale, and he throws his brush with the skill of a veteran. What a Bardolph he would make. It would require no further reddening of the nose; the color there is permanent. Such a fellow as he would have shone well in the train of the fat and lying knight.

This is the first season for Salts of Syracuse, and at the outset he pokes the handle of his brush into the stomach of Friday, much to the discomfiture of that individual, who says Neva Scotia, the province of his birth, is a very fine country—when it don't rain. Jersey, the ostler, who is now commencing his travels, conveys the impression to the small boys about the paste wagon that he is an "old showman," and wonders if the young lady who is viewing the picture of M'le. Rosina on horseback does not imagine that he is the manager. He discovers during the evening that the mysterious maiden is a dish-washer at the hotel, and from the day he leaves Newark, New Jersey, until he terminates his engagement at Calais, Maine, the revenue of the postal department is increased and the national debt materially lessened by the bulk of their correspondence; tin-type portraits in six-

teen distinct positions are exchanged, and much midnight oil consumed in the inditing of loving missives. John Garth, the programme juggler, gives the workers the value of his experience and advice; the contracting agent is badgering a stupid Dutchman, who deals in lager and bologna, speaks but little English, and that very much mixed; the director of publications is annoying the managing editor—in short, the advance corps are all at work, once more "on the road!"

Wait until the day's work is finished and set yourself down with the boys in the comfortable warmth given out by the stove in the hotel office. The contractor is looking over the contracts he has made during the day. The man of the pen is thinking up the copy for a three-sheet poster. The paste brigade are indulging in reminiscences. The little old man is full of them, and stretches the truth to an alarming extent. Jersey tells the most inane stories to the disgust of Salts. Friday and John Garth learnedly discuss the proper method of programming a show, and the Splinter at length secures the attention of all by relating his travels with Forepaugh, O'Brien and Haight & Wooten. As a preliminary he ties his long legs in a knot and proceeds to furnish a recipe to keep paste from spoiling.

"You don't know Steve Young, do you?" said the Splinter. "He always travels with the show that Charlie Castle goes with. Bob Armstrong, who used to be ahead of J. M. French told me this story. Last time I saw Bob he was a clerk in a hotel up in Rutland, Vermont. Doctor Jones, the writer, told me so. The doctor said that Steve's memory was not very good; so one day, that he mightn't forget the name of the next stand, he writ it on the foot board of the bill wagon with a piece of chalk. Ridin' over the country it got wore off, you know, by the rubbing of his feet, and when Steve came to a cross-road and wanted to ask the right road to take, he couldn't make out his memorandum; and he sat there, scratching his head and trying to think of the name. After a minute or two he gave it up and sang out to a man who was workin' in the field close by:

"I say, mister, can you tell me the name of a town near here which sounds sunthing like peck?"

"In course the farmer didn't know what peck meant, for he had never traveled with a show; but he commenced to name the towns, and by-me-by sez he, 'Eaton.'

"That's so," says Steve. 'Eating—Eaton—Eating; that's it—get up;' and away he went before the countryman had half finished telling him the way."

Early to bed, for the paste brigade must be on the road before daylight; the stands are all for one day, and there is no time to be lost. "Breakfast at four, landlord. Good night, good night." The trouble has not yet commenced. Wait until opposing companies strike our route, then the paper will fly; the little old man puts on his over-alls, and slings paste as if his existence were at stake; the contractor "jumps ahead" and secures billboards and posting places; the writer dips his pen in wormwood, and the battle rages; telegrams from the managerial commander-in-chief in the rear flash along the lines, the action has become general, the armor is buckled on, and the cry is "War!"

The strength of the road stock is tested to the utmost, as the drives are long, and man and horse begin to wear under the strain; rains set in and the roads become almost impassable. The agents hunt lots and licenses, wading in the slush; the newspaper man tells no more funny stories to local editors, but grows uglier and bitterer than his writings. Jersey wishes himself in Newark once more, and loses his much needed rest in writing letters to the fair dishwasher; Friday is the only happy man in the crowd; the weeping heavens and the muddy streets remind him so much of the land of Longfellow's Evangeline.

A mob of boys run hawling after the two teams that are dragged through the streets at a furious rate, considering the depth of the mud; the enemy have arrived, the paste brigade of the other show is here. "Now look out for a clash and quarrel," you say? No; there is where you make a mistake. The representatives of the rival circuses greet each other in the most cordial manner,

with many a hearty clasp of the hand and inquiry as to each other's health and prosperity. In an incredible short space of time the new comers are at work; the ringing echo of the carpenter's hammer tells of the rising of the mammoth bill boards. Like chivalrous soldiers they fight for the flag of their employer, leaving no duty undone that shall tend to bring him success; but when the day's labors are over they will gather about the stove in the hotel office and revive pleasant recollections of the past or discuss the merits of their respective shows.

The fall of the year will find them resplendent with new suits, laden with jewelry and brilliant with diamonds, their pockets distorted with immense wads of small notes, finding a welcome wherever they go—as long as the money lasts. There may be a perceptible difference in the texture of the cloth which the Splinter wears, and the stunning pin on his breast may be an "Alaska," but what of that? He feels just as big in his new suit as any man who has been "on the road."



MEHITABLE VERDANT'S VISIT TO A CIRCUS.—"I tell ye it made a pretty nice little company."

MEHITABLE VERDANT VISITS A CIRCUS.

"Law, suz! Mrs. Dewlittle, I'm pesky glad to see ye; walk in, set deown, arter I dust the cheer with my apron; don't know as you can stumick it tew set deown here, but I have been so busy sence Sary Jane has been visitin' deown to her Uncle Prosper's, that I ain't had time to turn recound, skereely.

So you hern tell how I went to the circus? Well, I might nave known, when any one that ain't a nateral born fool goes to goin' on in sech redicklus way, they must expect it. 'Spouse I've got my name up by it, an' it will be 'nuff to last me as long as I live.

"'Taint that I was follern' my teechin', I want you to understan', for I wur bro't up proper as any gal in my teown, and held as 'sponsible and hönorable position in

the sewin' sercieties and the mishunery organizations of our church. I don't know as I shall be able to recover my position in serciety arter sech cuttin's up.

"Yeou see, the way it cum tew happen was—there dew lay off yeour bunnit, jest one second, and let me tell yew all about it. Well, tew commence agin: Yeou know Dekun Verdant air the head slackman of eour town, and are been the same goin' on these ten years or more, an' some time I think what would become of the teown if the Dekun should leave the place; I'm sartin there's not one of 'em that could fill the place with sech dignitude.

"Well, as I was sayin', there cum along a feller, an' he talked so purty an' so flatterin' that Dekun gin him a license to show his circus on the teown square. I don't bleve Dekun wud have done it, but the feller was so smooth and offered to pay ten dollars for the lot and

give the Dekun all the family tickets he wanted, and then, as sez the Dekun to me, that night, that ten dollars will dew a heap of repairin' on the highways, and I dew think there is a real bad place right agin eour place, tho' sum folks is mean enuff to say that the Dekun duz all the reparin' 'reown his own farm; but a public officer must expect to be slandered. I allers was when I was presydent of the sewin' serciety. Didn't they go and say that my darter wore a pettercoat that was made for the heathin'—as fur myself I allers did bleve more in home missions than I did in furrin.

"Rekin I'm tirin' yeou, so I'll be gittin' along with my story. Yeou seen the great handbills in more cullers than there is in that table spread, and the circus cummin' in teown, an' all that—but I must say that it was the most gorgeousest thing I ever seen.

"When the time cum fur the show, Dekun, dressed up in his Sunday go-tew-meetin' clothes, took the lead an' away he went. There was Dekun an' I, an' eour sevin young uns and Square Breown—he's another wun of the slackmen—an' his wife, five children, and Mr. Jones—he's tother slackman—an his nine children, an' as cousin Smith was here with his family, he went along tew. I tell ye it made a purty nice little company, tho' I must confess the children were a little troublesome, heow as them Jones and Breown young un's never could agree.

"I was for goin' reoun' an' seein' all the side shows, but Dekun he sed 'less get in an' get eour seats, an' we can see all these things eoutside arter the show.' So we marched up to the hole in the tent, where a man stud takin tickets. The Dekun and Square Breown an' Mr. Jones handed up their family tickets and passed in. As we went in, wun of the mean, insultin' critters sed sumthin' about dead heds, and sez I, turnin' reoun, 'who air yeou a talkin' tew; don't yeou know I'm Mrs. Mehitable Verdant, wife of Dekun Verdant, first slackman of the teown?' That shet him up, an' sez he, 'excuse me, madame, I am using a professional term; an' sez I, 'well yeou needn't use any more of them tew me.' I bleve I shud have stopped and broke my parrysoll over his hed, if the music hadn't struck up jest that minit, and Dekun pushed me ahed, an' it was well he did, or we should have lost our seats.

"I red in the Herald what a shameful thing the Black Crook was, but I should think that this circus was a white crook, for all the men were undressed in white clothes, jest as tight as their skins; it's a wonder they didn't break their necks, an' it ain't much pity, in my way of thinking, that they didn't. If I should tell you all I can, it would take me all day, and I wouldn't be half done then. Of course the last part of the show was the most excitin', and every one was stannin' on the seats, so as to see over the heads of those who wur stannin' up in front of them; it made my dander rise, an' thunks I tew myself, I'll stan' up tew. Neow, it ain't no easy job fur a woman like me to git on her feet very lively. Jest as I wuz on my feet—ye see I'm purty heavy, weighing nigh on tew two hundred and forty pounds, an' jest my luck—the little limpsey board I wur stannin' on gin way, an' kerflummux we all went, young uns an' all, kerslap.

"I cum deown on top of a feller, and nearly squashed

him. As it wur, his stove-pipe hat were flattened out like a sheet of paper. Arter tuggin' an' pullin', an' haulin', the Dekun got me on tew my feet agin, an' by that time the circus was over, an' we went eout with the crowd. I wur so mad, from making myself so ridiculous from fallin', an' what with every one laughin' and hawhawin' as if they would bust, you could have lit a candle on my face.

"When we got eout to the door, a feller, who was introduced to Dekun as Mr. Barnum, the owner of the show, tried to pacify and palaver over the matter, an' I felt so preoud in becomin' acquainted with the great showman, who had so much to do with Jenny Lind and Tom Thumb, that I fergot my misfortin' an' the next minit was bowin' an' scrapin' tew sheow him that I had not fergot my airly dancin' school lessons and proper manners belongin' to the wife of the first slackman of the teown; then he treated us to small beer an' leminade, and I ain't placin' it any too high when I say that he spent full seventy-five cents on us before we could get rid on him. I don't know how long I should have stud there talkin' an' laffin', an' drinkin' leminade an' eatin' peanuts, wur it not that I happened to think what a figgur I cut, stannin' there with my bunnit all mashed in, an' a great long rent in the front breadth of my geown. So I curched an' bid Mr. Barnum good bye, arter shakin' han's with him, and put home as straight as I could go, 'cross lots, while the Dekun stopped to collect the license from the manager.

"Soon as I got home I changed my clothes, an' arter supper went to darnin' the hole in my dress. As the Dekun didn't come, I guessed as how he wuz dinein' deown at the tavern, long of Mr. Barnum—and so he wuz, just as I expected. Well, I sot up an' I sot up, an' the Dekun didn't cum till nigh on tew twelve o'clock; purty time o' night want that, for a pillar or the church to cum crawlin' intew the heous like a thief; an' it did seem tew me as tho' the Dekun's breth did smell powerful strong, as tho' he had been drinking camphene, and he hiccupped atween every word he spoke, an' if he hadn't have been a member of the Good Templars, I should have sartinly sed that he wur somewhat in hecker, tew say the least, but Dekun Verdant is not a drinking man.

"Well, the next mornin' the Dekun complained of bein' onwell an' havin' a terrible hard head ache, and he never eat a mouthful anything, an' only dranked a cup of coffee our his breakfuss, an' looked as holler-eyed as tho' he had been on a sick bed for a fortnight. Well, as we had so much extra company at breakfuss, I was obliged to send over Dorothy Ann to Squire Breown's tew git a cut of beef from the steer which they killed the day afore. When I went to my dress pocket, which I wore the day afore, the money was not there—my puss was gone! Then I was distrest, an' I rushed into the bed room, an' sez I, 'Dekun Verdant, I've lost my puss!' an' then the Dekun groaned as if in bitterness of sperrit. I went tew his breeches pockets an' tuk eout his pocket book, an' there waut a five cent stamp in it. I looked over toward the Dekun, an' he wur a snorin' as tho' he wur asleep. I knew better than that; but I want a goin' to kick up a row when we had a house full of company.

"I was bound to find out how that came; for, tew my smartin' knowledge, the Dekun had nigh on tew forty dollars in his pocket, not speakin' of the license munny which he was to collect. Neow if yeou'll never tell a livin' breathin' soul I'll tell yeou. Arter the Dekun and Mr. Barnum had tuk supper tewgether, they played a little sociable hand at keards, an' I've hearn tell that the Dekun was dreful playin' bluff when he wur a young man, an' it want but a little while afore they got tew playin' fur ten cents, jest to make it interestin', as Mr. Barnum said. By an' bye, sez he, after he had dealt a hand—I think I have a hand here which I should like to bet a trifle on, if I wur a bettin' man."

The Dekun looked in his han'. Seein' as heow he had four kings, he said he 'wouldn't mind goin' five dollars on it.' Mr. Barnum sed he wur agreeable, an' didn't mind makin' it ten. Dekun spunked up an' said 'twenty, if you like; then it went forty an' then fifty, which wur all the Dekun had with him. An' then he showed his hand,

but Mr. Barnum had four aces and tuk the pile. The Dekun might have kneown it, playin' with that pesky humbug. An' then Mr. Barnum excused himself, an' that's the last he saw of him.

"Neow yeou can see what has cum from that pesky circus. I ruined my geown, spoilt my bunnit, an' lost at least fifteen dollars while I was talkin' with Mr. Barnum. The Dekun was eout of pocket fifty dollars, and the landlord's wife told me he had a dreadful big score, runnin' clean across the cellar door, a treatin' the clown an' them showmen. But we ain't goin' to have any more sech goin's on here; the slackmen have met an' voted that circuses an' sech 'air demoralising, an' that they henceforth be discountenanced by eour teown."

"I'm half a mind to think that chap was not the real Mr. Barnum; but since hs run for Congress, I think he's bad enough for pretty much anything, an' I'm goin' to bleve it is him until I have purty strong proof to the contrary."

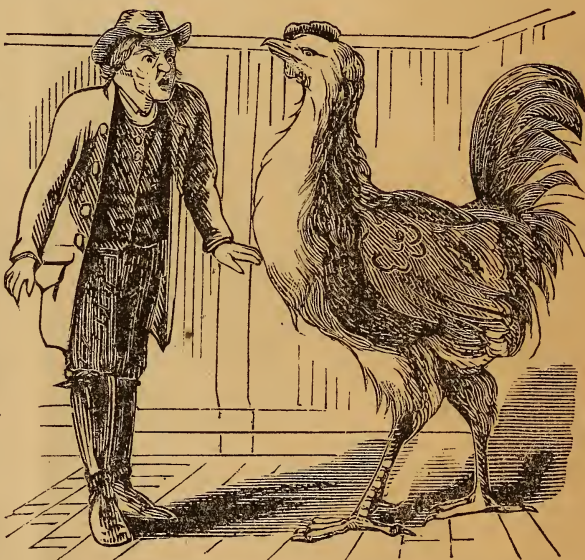
GREAT AMERICAN HEN SHOW.

Harry Hapgood is a veteran in the legion of advance agents. It is not to my purpose here to chronicle the travels of that gentleman, either with Madame Rentz's Female Minstrels, the Bridgeport Amateurs, or when he braved the briny deep to herald Rumsey & Newcomb's opening, with their American minstrel band, in Liverpool. Hapgood's practical jokes and escapades at home and abroad are numerous.

"Once upon a time" he found himself disengaged, and, not wishing to idle away his time and at the same time squander his funds, he set his wits to work to conceive some new method of relieving the public of their spare change. At the time the "hen fever" was at its height, and the yards of fanciers were filled with elephantine fowls called Bramah Pootrahs, Chittagongs, Cochins and Shanghaes Burnham had sent a trio of Burnham Pootrahs to the Queen of England, and everybody had run chicken mad.

A new idea came to Hapgood in the midst of his reflections, and he proceeded to its speedy execution. Purchasing of fanciers several trios of the several breeds of Asiatic fowls, he placed them in cages, and, announcing, in mammoth display type, "The Great American Hen Show," opened his exhibition in a vacant store or small hall in each town he visited. The nominal price of admission—ten cents—did not yield much revenue, about covering expenses only; but the profit was derived from the sale of the eggs of the rare poultry.

As might be expected, the number of eggs laid was not equal to the demand. Still, Hapgood never turned away a customer, buying eggs by the barrel at the grocer's at twenty cents a dozen and disposing of them as the product of his "premium stock" on exhibition, at the rate of \$10 per dozen.



"A PRIZE BIRD"

The star trio was ticketed as "Own brother and sisters of the trio of Burnham Pootrahs presented to Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, by Geo. P. Burnham, Esq." Of course the "hen fruit" of the relatives of the American-Asiatic delegates to the royal henery brought a fancy price, nothing less than \$50 a dozen or \$5 the single egg. Unlike other poulters, the showman had no hesitation in warranting the eggs he sold to hatch, and as he tucked the money of his victim in his pocket, would remark:

"Fresh laid; I'll warrant 'em. If they don't hatch, save them till I come along again, and I'll sit on them myself."

Hapgood's "Great American Hen Show" was a success, despite the fact that he was obliged to be governed by the incubation of the eggs he sold, and be well out of the region of his operations before the chicks showed their "true feather" and the false one of the eccentric exhib-

itor. Gradually the hen fever waned, and fanciers tiring of their expensive pets, ruthlessly rung their necks and consigned them to the pot, or disposed of them at almost any price to get rid of the gourmands.

The "Great American Hen Show" closed, and the manager accepted a position with a circus as chief-in-charge of the "paste brigade." The "prize" birds were sold to a butcher, not even excepting the relatives of the hen royals, who, by the way, were the toughest and oldest in the lot. Their former owner says that they were purchased by a lady who "took in boarders," and remarked that they were "indeed prize fowls, as they went further than any she ever had before; they were on the table two weeks before the boarders finished eating them."

When the hen show man engaged himself to the circus he made diligent inquiry as to the route to be traveled, not desiring to return so soon to the scenes of his late conquests; but as fate would have it, they met with too strong opposition as they continued on the route prospected, and wheeling about, dismayed their chief of the paste by ordering him in to what might fitly be called the enemy's country.

At first thought Hapgood was going to tender his resignation, but, as the salary he was receiving was satisfactory, he decided to run the chances of detection, and to better prevent recognition, sacrificed his moustache and had his hair cut so short that he looked more like a pugilist in training than the late proprietor of the "Great American Hen Show."

For several weeks Hapgood escaped recognition, but at last he was detected. It is his delight now—and it was then—to tell stories, and is never happier than in relating anecdotes to the hangers-on about a country hotel, and conveying them such startling and hitherto undivulged information as that Barnum's plowing elephant was made of India rubber, and blown up with a bellows, and the learned seal, a nice piece of mechanism, a mere automaton, invented by F. C. Pratt. The world is full of doubters; and it is not remarkable that some of his hearers were drawn into discussion, when Hapgood always produced documentary evidence (in his own handwriting, signature and all) and substantiated his statements. Political topics were often broached in these free-lyceums, and the showman had one evening just made the positive assertion that Joice Heth was his own sister, when a tall countryman occupying a back seat blurted:

'The Great American Hen Show man, I swear.'

An announcement that set the room full in a roar of laughter.

"I bought a dozen of your eggs," continued the speaker.

"They hatched, didn't they?" queried Hapgood, seeing that he was known.

"Every one," was the reply.

"Well, you are satisfied with your bargain, ain't you?" interrogated Hapgood.

'Wall, I spose as I was humbugged, I might as well acknowledge the corn, though I expected to raise some mighty smart stock out of them eggs. You know you said there was a quarter dozen each of Bramah Putrids, Coachey Chinners, Shang-hies and Chittergongs."

"Oh, yes!" chimed Hapgood, "I recollect. How did they turn out?"

The amateur hen fancier looked about him rather sheepishly, and answered:

"Wall, I'll be durned, if when them eggs come to hatch if eleven of them warn't ducks, and the other one was a banty rooster."

The victim saw that there was little use of being ill humored or indignant about the imposition practiced upon him, and joined in a hearty laugh at his own expense.

Hapgood recovered from his temporary discomfiture in a few minutes, and amused his auditors, including the poultry-fancier, by telling them of an individual who traveled with a menagerie, and, finding his wages inadequate, added to his income by selling goose eggs to such patrons as were desirous of breeding ostriches, he promising to buy such as were raised, and pay for them a fabulous sum.

The last time I saw Hapgood he was organizing a Parlor Italian Opera Troupe. Buoyant and confident as ever, he said:

"Something new for me to try a hand at, but I guess I'll make it go. I've got a pocket map of Italy, and have read up the books of travel pretty well. I'm just from Italy, you know (by the way of Newark), and shall have a good deal of information to give to the agents of the halls and the bill posters. You see I wax my mustache now; it gives one a foreign appearance."

I wished the veteran the greatest success with Italian Opera, but he cannot excel the triumphs of the "Great American Hen Show."

THE PLANTER'S DAUGHTER.

The locale of this little sketch was not in the brick-wall confines of the city or the small hamlet upon the line of some grand trunk railway, but way off among the green clad hills and mountains of Vermont, where the city's denizen fled from its heat and dust to breathe the pure air and snuff the new mown hay that made all the fields odorous with its fragrance.

Among those who wended their way to the northern clime to mingle in the select society of the summer resort, to idle and recreate and commune with nature, came a planter and his daughter from the land of cotton, wild honey and the 'possum.

The parent would have passed for a Southron everywhere and anywhere, with his dark complexion, black eyes, inky mustache and long hair. His name might have been St. Elms, St. Cloud, St. John, Montmorency or some other musical sounding and romantic cognomen; but that is neither here nor there. Evaline was the fair daughter's name, and quite a proud and haughty young maid was she, with her father's midnight hair and piercing black eyes.

Like a queen she moved in the very select circle at the mountain house, and few were the aspiring attendants

that received the slightest recognition from the young beauty other than the haughtiest observance of a cold and studied etiquette.

One sultry afternoon the quietness and the slumbers of the guests who had dropped off into a doze after reading the newspapers received by the last mail, was aroused by the crack of the driver's whip, and up rolled the coach and six, which was immediately surrounded by the attentive clerks, a couple of porters and half a dozen bell boys.

Two of the outside passengers brought important news, and the registering of their names created quite a stir, and the news was soon communicated from parlor to kitchen that the circus was coming, and the agent was now in the house.

Two hours later, when a corps of carpenters commenced the erection of a bill-board, and the "paste brigade" arrived under the direction of a little wizened, withered-up old man, a miniature edition of a shrunken Rip Van Winkle, the news was confirmed.

The fair young Evaline's eyelids had fallen drooping over Longfellow's "Miles Standish," while she pictured in her mind's romantic fancy John Alden leading his white steer and its precious burden.

We all have our day dreamings and castle building, and the little old man who drove the wagon had his; and all that day as he climbed the hill-tops from the city left behind, he had longed for the tenting season to come to an end that he might return to Gotham and there once more bask in the smiles of his Sarah, a maid-of-all-work, in Avenue Three.

Toward the close of the evening, when the labors of the carpenters had been completed, the antiquated Lilliputian and his bevy of assistants pasted upon the bulletin board a many-colored display of mammoth posters, and as the miniature Rip Van Winkle directed his forces, the maiden fair with the raven hair, in her poetical imagination thought them to be as of the Roman heralds of old, proclaiming to all to come and see what they had never seen before and never would see again.

Early in the coming morn, before the sun could rise to burn the dew from the clover tops and the leaves of grass, the emissaries of the circus were away—the contracting agent, with his pencil behind his ear and enveloped in a lemon-colored linen duster, the newspaper man, a Bohemian in a velvet coat, and the Falstaff-like army of the little old man—in all a rare combination of the "long and short of humanity."

Before the advent of the circus there was plenty of time to discuss its happily worded announcements in programme and newspaper advertisements, and by the consent and approval of the several controlling Mrs. Grundy's it was voted to be quite the thing to go to the circus.

Everybody was going.

They went.

The proud planter was there with his prouder daughter, and both seemed to highly enjoy the efforts of the riders, the gymnasts and the clowns.



THE PLANTER'S DAUGHTER.—"He sat himself boldly down close at her side."

Among the tumblers was one of comely and manly form, straight as an arrow, as writers of Indian romances say, black of hair and eyes, dark of complexion, but with excellent features and intelligent in look.

As he of the tights and spangles looked about the sawdust ring, which he trod in conscious superiority, he met the approving gaze of the planter's daughter, and felt proud, indeed, when he saw her pretty hand patting in applause, and with redoubled exertions he fairly outdid himself.

That evening when he left the circus tent and walked slowly and pensively to the hotel, deep in thought of the charms of the dark-eyed beauty of the sunny south-land, he was unexpectedly rewarded by meeting her face to face as she sat gazing upon the rising moon creeping its way above the mountain tops far away. Making bold, as lovers sometimes do—for he was in love—he sat himself boldly down close at her side, where the vine-clad lattice prevented obtrusive observation.

"Quite unlike your cotton-land, lady, is this mountain nook."

At first the maiden gave a quick start, as if to vacate her chair, offended at the boldness of the intruder, but seemingly controlled by a second thought, she again reclined at ease, but remained silent.

The intruding youth, taking his cue from a volume of Tennyson, which had taken the place of our American poet, which laid idly in her lap, with a taper finger between the leaves as a place-keeper to indicate where the fair reader "left off" in the weary waiting and the never-coming Enoch Arden.

"Do you not pine sometimes in this secluded rural retreat for the more balmy clime and warmer skies of your own congenial home?"

The maiden nodded, but made no other reply.

"I sigh, myself," he continued, "for the land of the magnolia, when the ice-bound winters fall upon us here; and even now, when the Summer's heat oppresses, I could find relief in some deeply shaded lagoon where the moss-grown trees are densely o'erspread with the clinging vine."

The lady smiled sweetly at his rhapsody, and emboldened, he again resumed, eagerly drinking in the beauty of the non-communicative daughter of the South.

"Tom Moore, you know, wrote some of his sweetest lines in Norfolk of your own dear old Virginia, the mother of presidents, as she so well is called."

And still the maiden made no reply, but seemed to be mind-roaming far away, floating on an open sea with the sailor hero of the poet laureate. For some moments an awkward silence followed, and the young athlete gazed vacantly upon the slowly rising, far distant moon, which shed a faint glimmer on the dark-hued, verdure-clad mountain. At length he spoke again in a voice whose cadence told of the admiration he bore the queenly being at his side.

"Lady, as I beheld you to-day, while performing my duties in the arena, I thought I saw pictured in the delicate features of yourself a sister whom I love so well; and as I saw the manly form of your noble parent at your side, was reminded of my own father. It is a misfortune, you know," he said, as a tinge of sadness came over his trembling voice, "that my avocation calls me away from those I love and cherish, bringing me in contact with the stranger and the cold formalities of the world. You cannot know, lady, how I pine, sometimes, for the association of some sweet girl whom I may call a sister; and when gazing about me during my performances, I often single out some pure-faced one like you, and as my imagination has reign fancy that she is, as I thought you, my sister."

Again there was silence, and for quite a lengthy duration, caused by lover-strollers, who, unaware of encroachment on others' solitude, meander near. After a while their footsteps and hushed voices died away, and the athlete interrogated:

"Have you not sometimes, yourself, thought that you recognized the features of an old friend in the face of an entire stranger?"

The drooping eyelids lifted and the rosebud lips parted

as she spoke in accents that fell from them like the sweetest Æolian music.

"I have not noted it so particularly myself, but father remarked to-day, when he first saw you quit the ring, that your countenance was very familiar—"

"Indeed!" interrupted the young man, overjoyed that the beauty had broken her silence.

"Yes," she continued, "and he turned to me and said: 'By George, that young fellow is a perfect picture of a molasses-colored nigger that I used to own!'"

When the moonbeams fell upon the piazza at the maidens feet, she sat alone, far at sea with Enoch Arden.

IN WINTER QUARTERS.

The fire burned brightly and the circus folk gathered round. The night clerk nodded at his desk, and the pointers of the clock indicated the near approach of midnight. Broadway, the city's great thoroughfare, was hushed, and disturbed only by the occasional carriage, at long intervals, rolling over the paved way. The boys were now ripe for fun. Landlord Leland had just retired to his room, and the "Independent Order of Night Hawks"—as they termed themselves—had an established rule that "this body shall convene so soon as the proprietor may retire, or as soon thereafter as practicable."

From room No. 1, close by, the familiar voices of Joel Warner, Andy Springer, Frank Rosston, Charlie Pell, George Guilford, Darwin Colvin, Charlie Castle, Hughes and other managerial and literary lights in the sawdust world, have sometime since ceased. Some of the setters about the fire were in full dress and sparkling with diamonds, while others had a careless air which spoke plainly of "good times" in the Summer, and a "paying for the whistle" all winter.

Strange and humorous were the yarns they spun, each vying with the other. Billy Burke, as usual, was enthusiastic about James Robinson, with whom he traveled the past season, and mentioned special occasions when the "champion of the world" performed the most wonderful things upon the flying steed. At length, in his relation he came to the occasion of a disturbance. The show was in a southwestern city, and no sooner was the tent pitched than a quarrelsome individual, full of "family quarrel," began to make himself obnoxious to circus people and the public.

As described by the clown, there traveled with Robinson as boss canvasser an individual combining in himself the powers of Mace, O'Baldwin and Coburn rolled into one—a mountain of flesh and muscle—but, withal, a good natured fellow, not easily stirred up to aggression. About the time of the commencement of the afternoon performance the fusil oil had so worked upon the Ruben that he became more obtrusive and obnoxious than ever, and after declaring his intention of single handed whipping every man, woman and child on the lot, wound up by shouting at the top of his voice:

"I'm all wool, and a yard wide."

At that precise moment the boss canvasman lost his temper and landed a tremendous blow directly under the ear of the turbulent character, who would have measured his length upon the ground but for the fact that directly behind him stood a tall, heavy mule; when the canvasman struck the mule, his body fairly flying in the air, there was a loud thud, and the dumb animal fell prostrate with a jar that shook the earth.

"You had ought to have seen that fellow," said Burke, glancing about to note the effect of his story. "He crawled out from among the mule's heels, as tears of pain started in his eyes, and turning upon the crowd said:

"I wouldn't mind a man hitting me, but to think of being kicked by a mule!"

The crowd laughed and shouted, and the disturbing element, a good deal sobered, sneaked out of the lot and away not to be seen there again.

At the conclusion of this anecdote there were some dissenting voices, but members who had themselves drawn the long-bow pretty freely were willing to credit it.

Naturally from war the conversation turned to love, and Joe Reynolds, who handled the cash for the Satsuma Japs during their tour under the canvas, related a remarkable instance of love at first sight. He would not be responsible for the statement himself, for it was told to him by Mike Coyle, of the Stone & Murray party.

James Maguire, of the motley, interposed the hope that Mr. Reynolds would not romance, and then place the responsibility upon an absent friend far away in Syracuse. Joseph protested against any doubts of his truthfulness being raised; he had in boyhood cut his father's cherry tree, and could never tell a lie.

The tale he told was of a handsome side-show blower—"solicitor" Mr. Reynolds called him—in form an Apollo, and perfect in feature; eloquence flowed from his lips as sweet sounds from a silver bell. One day he was more eloquent than ever; the choicest and most euphonious words melted at his tongue's end, and flowed through his lips.

"I am a rich man's son in disguise," he cried, and in the crowd there was a lovely maid, who believed him, and then and there at first sight fell deep in love with the side-showman. She was smitten and he was smitten.

At this moment the hand organ within struck up a lively air, and many of the crowd passed in, keeping time to the music. As the rural beauty handed her money and passed in, he, by accident, pressed her hand.

He sighed and she sighed.

In a few moments they were acquainted, and she promised to come to the big show again that night, which she did, and they met again. He avowed his love, and she reciprocated his passion. They would flee; they fled immediately after the performance, and the pair stole away, not as knight and lady of old, but riding on top of the side-show canvas. They were married in the next town, just before the arrival of an indignant father, who had followed in pursuit. But he forgave them, and bid them live happy ever after.

"And who do you think she was?" asked Reynolds—a conundrum which no one answered. "Her father was a selectman or the town, and very rich. If I was to tell you

half what he was worth you wouldn't believe me. The next season that side-showman went out with his own circus; the next season he had a menagerie; and I should not be at all surprised if this season he run six tents, for he is very wealthy and never will be outdone."

Silence reigned about the room, only broken by the heavy breathing of the sleepers, who had, one by one, dropped off into the arms of Morpheus. The disgusted story teller arose, and, whispering in the ear of the half-awake night clerk:

"If you've got the key to the bar, Al, I think I'll take a drink," whereupon every sleeper sat bolt upright, opened wide their eyes, and exclaimed in one voice:

"Well, I don't care if I do."

That story never was finished; and perhaps without that reliable biographer, Kit Clarke, should unravel the mystery, it will never be known what manager loved and wed under such romantic circumstances. Thus the hours sped on until the passengers who were to leave the city by the early morning trains began to appear.



IN WINTER QUARTERS.—"I am a rich man's son in disguise," he cried.

Gus Lee, the blonde clown, dilated upon his unacted tragedy. Burke had many a tale to spin of times when he served under the banners of J. M. French. So will pass away the winter nights until Spring time brings genial weather, and the settled roads invite them again to the tented field.

Perchance, on warm days in early Spring time, the boys may air their straw hats and Summer clothes in front of the hotel, in hope that they may thereby induce the managers to start out the advance guard of advertisers and contractors, and commence the season a week sooner than had been expected.

Again on the road, the first remittances for some weeks are to the landlord, to lessen the winter's score. The biting frost and chill autumn weather once more returns them to the cheerful fireside, the stories and the humors of tights and spangles "in winter quarters."

THE CLOWN'S PROTEGE.

"How'dy, how'dy. Putting up the pictures, aint ye? Fine set of printing you've got there, young men, seems to me. The colors are bright, and the drawings 'mazing good. The coming of you fellows with the bill wagon is better than any alminax for me. What takes my eye more'n all the rest, is that clown cut. I think that is the beautifulest one I ever see, except one, and that was when I was clowning myself.

"Took me for a minister? well, that wur a joke, by jove, ha! ha! I never spouted a minute in the pulpit in all my born days; but I tumbled and made fun in the ring for more'n thirty years. They said I made them laugh, and I think it's better to laugh than to cry, don't you? It's a great comfort to me to think that I've done something in my life to make the world happier, and to my thinking the happier they is the better they be. Ain't I detaining you? No? Glad to hear it. I'll tell you 'bout that cut. The story ain't a long one; it's in one chapter, and ain't to be continued. Facts is what you want and not figures, though I've got the day and the date set down in a book home. That house yonder that looks so white and smart, with the green blinds on, is mine, and there the old woman and I are going to spend the balance of our days.

"When I come in that fall I had intended going home to spend the winter, but the managers concluded to play a season in one of the theatres, and so I made an engagement with them. One night I was going home from the theatre. It was terribly stormy, and what from the snow on the walk and that which blinded my face, it was all I could do to get along; it was bitter cold, although I was muffled up well. Pretty soon I come along to a side street that run out from Broadway; it was a tough neighborhood in them days, as it is now. Just as I got against the lamp post a woman grabbed me by the arm and said:

"For the love of heaven, stranger, quick, there's a woman dying—a real lady."

"I stopped an' looked at her. The gaslight shone in her face and I saw she was a bad one, but still there was something so dreadful earnest about her that I went with her, and all the while I kept thinking there might be some trick or trap about it. She stopped before a rickety, tumble-down house, but it were worse inside than out, as I found when I followed her up a dark stairway feeling with my hands and following the sounds of the woman's footsteps. Before we got to the garret I could hear groans of pain and heavy breathing; there was a few dying embers in an old fire place, and the attic chamber, which it was, were so cold that it made my teeth chatter; the snow had sifted in through the worn roof and drifted in about the windows. After a while the woman managed to light a candle, and then I saw a sight I never shall forget.

"Mister, don't judge her by me; she was as pure as the snow that falls to-night."

"There was a board loose in the floor; I ripped it up, and then another and another, and breaking them, threw them upon the embers, which we fanned into a flame

that soon kindled a warm fire; then I pulled the mattress close up to the fire.

"The light shone upon her face—she was dead!

"I thought morning never would come; but at last it did. Then I sent the woman out for some food for the child; after which she brought some wood, little bundles, in her hands, that she called 'poor folks' cords.' While she was doing these errands I wrote a note to my wife on some blank leaves from my memorandum book.

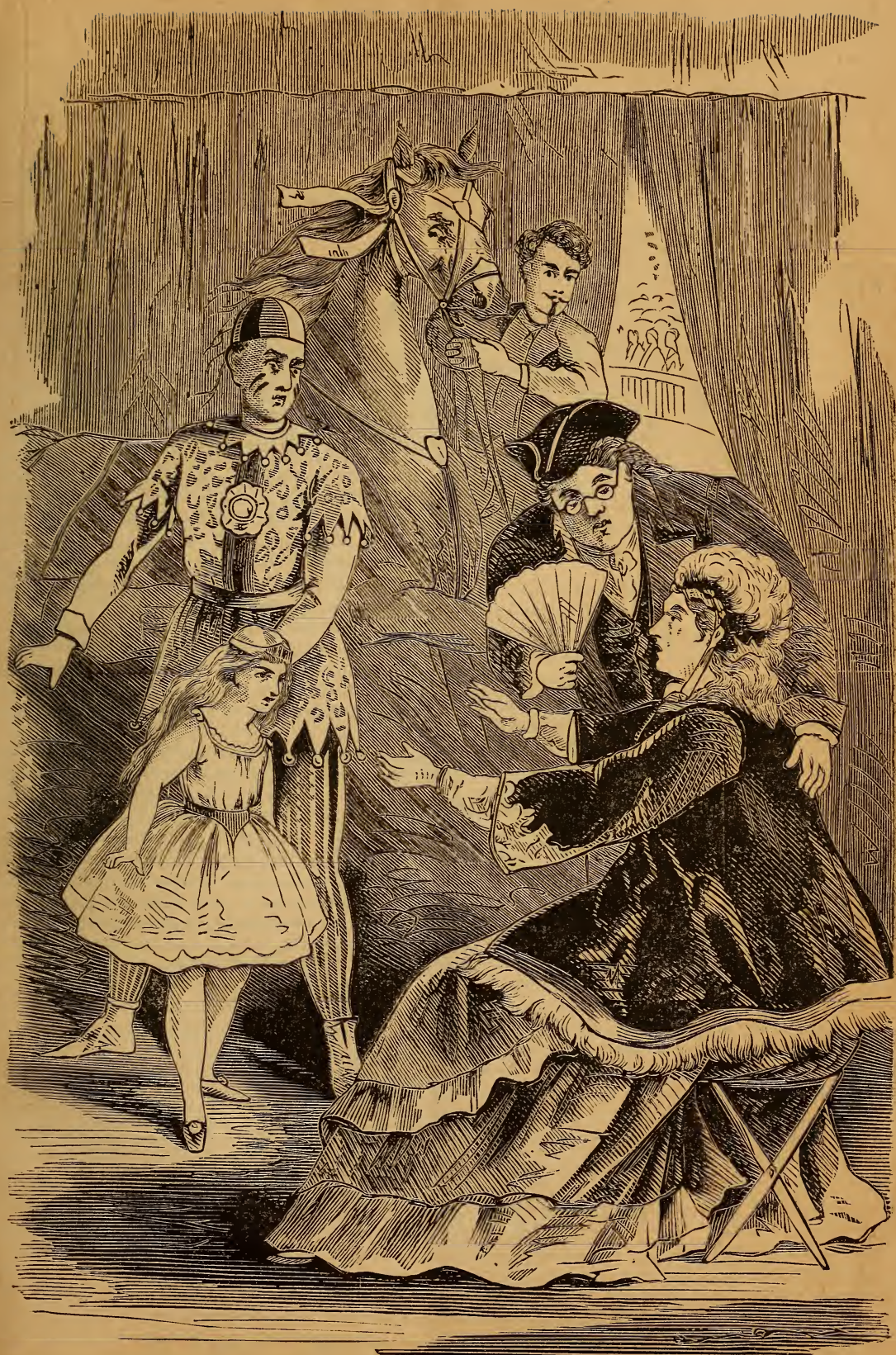
"It was a decent funeral, sir, but nothing grand, and I felt sad like when I heard the poor, wretched woman say that more than likely her bones would rest in the Potter's Field. Wife and I took the little one home, and for a long while it called for mamma, and worried a good deal; but after a while it got contented and learned to call me Dad, and was so cunning, bright and beautiful that we loved it as if it were our own.

"The woman in the tenement house told us that there used to come to see her a man, the dead woman's husband; that she heard that he drank and gambled; after a while there was nothing seen of him, and then the young mother sank down until she died. There was a package of old letters in a trunk in the garret—it was empty of almost everything else. I suppose that what she had possessed had been sold to keep the breath of life in the body of herself and child. There were letters, in a man's hand, full of love, which had been writ to her, and there was one, a very long one, in a woman's hand, which commenced: 'Dear father,' which must have been her own writing. It had never been opened, but was enclosed in an envelope addressed in a man's hand back to her.

"Woman's wits are ready. Wife said that the poor thing had married against her father's will, and he had discarded her, and then she had been deserted to die in a miserable hovel. The baby girl grew prettier and smarter every day of her life, and from traveling 'round so much with wife and me, she took a great liking to the horses, and by and by I learnt her to ride. Why, sir, it was one of the takingest acts I ever seen in the ring, and I never clowned better than when I seen her dashing around the ring without the least fear of danger. She called us father and mother, and we were very proud of her. I made her a present of the horse she rode, and put her salary in the bank, regular.

"One day we made a stand in a big city, and I recollect standing at the door when the mayor passed in; he was a fine looking, white haired old gentleman, and his wife and some other ladies made up the party. This was in the Summer time, and we were under canvas. The performance went off splendid, and nothing occurred until we come to the little one's act, and no sooner had she rode into the ring than the mayor's wife shrieked like, and fainted dead away. As she set on the seats well 'round to the dressing room, they carried her in there.

"When I came out of the ring with the little one the mayor was fanning the old lady, who sat on a camp stool as pale as a sheet. She beckoned the little one to her, and kissed her and cried as if her heart would break. I understood it all then, and says I to wife, 'that's little one's grandfather and grandmother,' and so it was.



THE CLOWN'S PROTEGE.—“She beckoned the little one to her, and kissed her.”

"They claimed her, of course—little one was sensible. We hated to part from her, but we knew it was best. Wife and I cried, and little one cried, too. She took the pony, too, and has him now.

"When I went out the Spring after, that little one asked me what I would like best in the world, and I told her a new clown cut of my own. I've got one of them framed now, over at the house in the parlor there.

"Little one—we call her little one yet—never forgets the wife and me. These gold eye-glasses she give me, and specs of gold to wife, too. Right side of the clown cut in the parlor over yonder is a beautiful picture of her, big as life and twice as natural. Little one is a great lady where she lives, and rich—so rich that you wouldn't believe if I was to tell you. And you wouldn't think now, to see her riding in her own carriage, that she used to ride in the ring while I clowned the act

"The lots? Why, that's my lot you are going to show on. You see I am quite a real estate owner, and then it gives encouragement for the managers so come this way, for I don't charge a cent for it. It makes me have the old spell come over me to see them bills. I'm half a mind to jump into the ring just for a day, to see how it seems."

SAWDUST.

One of the most touching Christmas stories penned by Charles Dickens was "Hard Times," many of the characters therein, being "in the profession" and members of Sleary's Circus Company. It appears that this Sleary had much of the shrewdness of some of our latter day managers, who disguise the name of circus by the title of "Aggregation" "Hippotheatron," "Equestrian Institute," or "Zoolohippo-zonomadon," and floated a flag from his wooden temple advertising "Sleary's Horse Ridings."

There are many Gradgrinds to-day who assume to look in scorn upon the circus and amusements of all kinds, who, reflecting no rays of sunshine themselves, throw dark shadows over all with whom they come in contact. Thomas Gradgrind was an eminently practical man, and when he caught his children, with the curiosity of youth, peeping through the boarding of "Sleary's horse riding" at the graceful equestrian Tyrolean flower act of Miss Josephine Sleary, he looked upon them as already half past redemption, and reprimanded them severely that they should have exhibited so much interest in the circle of the circus while the circle of mathematics and sciences were open to them.

"I was tired, father; I have been tired a long time," replied his daughter. And it was no wonder. She had been crammed with facts like an encyclopedia; to be a cow was "graminivorous, ruminating quadruped with several stomachs," and the world a combination of conchological, metallurgical and mineralogical substances.

But Dickens takes a sweet revenge on the image of his father, and Thomas Gradgrind, as the romance went,

lived to see his heir a clown in Sleary's show. He was not a jolly fellow, though, but a hang dog chap, and not the least way funny, which must have been more aggravating still to his paternal parent.

Sleary's bill writer was as eloquent as Guilford, Hughes, or Crum, and delved as deep into the dictionary to unearth words in which to express the immensity of his attraction. The "nine oils" of E. W. B. Childers, "the Wild Huntsman of the North American Prairies," would not heal the bruises that the school boys now-a-days receive while attempting the feats that they see portrayed in many brilliant colors on the mammoth posters, and forgetting the bright examples of the historic page before them, burn, not to be a Washington, Jefferson or Adams, but the hero of the motley—a clown.

It is a serious thing to be a clown and be funny. This poor Sissy Jupe knew to her sorrow, for her father got old and his jokes were threadbare and time-worn, like himself; the people no longer laughed and applauded with delight, and one night, when the audience "goosed him," he went away and left the little circus rider alone in the world. When she was questioned about her father she recollected how he came home and cried as if his heart would break because he was no longer funny; and Sissy Jupe always spoke the awful word "clown" in a whisper.

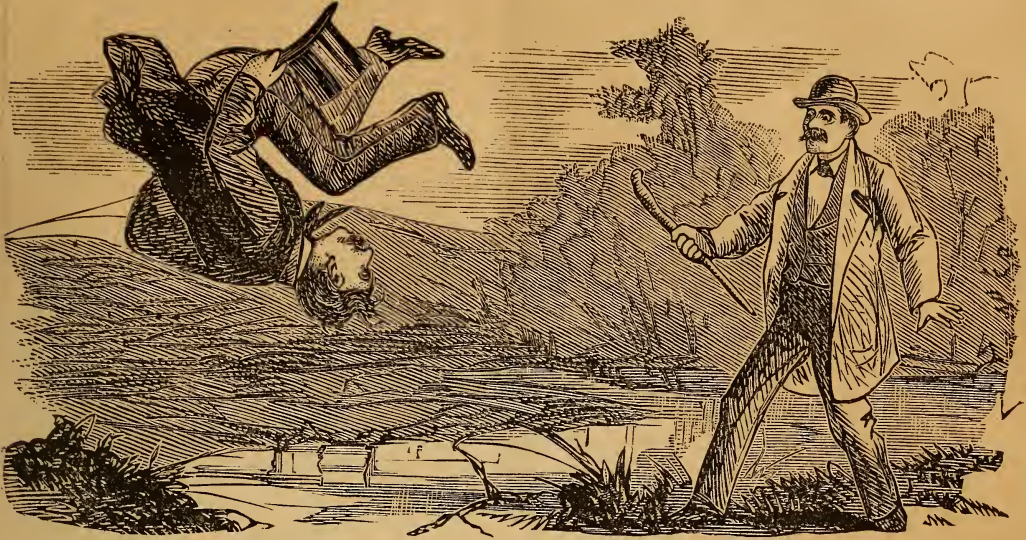
Some of the profession are, perhaps, as improvident to-day as was Jupe, the clown; and, when time creeps on, will share his fate by losing the favor of those roles once applauded to the echo. Others invest their surplus that they may enjoy old age or a rainy day out of their own treasure.

Jupe was a clown "in the sere and yellow leaf," whose best days were gone and passed forever, and Tom Gradgrind a sour, ill-natured clown; neither of them in the least like the clown of which I am going to write.

There is not a happier or jollier fellow that dons the spangles and the motley than Billy Burke, the clown of James Robinson's circus. William is a russett blonde, fair to look upon, and a great admirer of the fair sex. Alas! how many fond hearts of maidens fair bleed for him: But, like the roving sailor, in each new conquest, he forgets the old. While eating supper one evening, appeasing a hearty appetite, created by the exercise in the ring during the afternoon, he was handed a note by the waiter, and, breaking the seal of the monogrammed and perfumed envelope, he read:

"I gazed upon your manly form for the first time to-day. You are a stranger and you know me not, but I cannot tell you how deeply, how wildly, how madly I love you. I feel that I must see you to know you, and with my own lips tell you how I pine for thee. I will see you to-night, after the performance. Await me at the door of the tent, and under the blue canopy of heaven, and naught but the moon and the twinkling stars shining down upon us, we will pass the hours away, our two souls melting into one. Your own, but unknown darling,
"MATILDE."

The clown suddenly lost his appetite; his curiosity was aroused, and he longed to meet his strange admirer. To him that night's performance seemed to drag tediously, and in his absence of mind he came near repeating the self-same "gags" several times. Before the last act was



SAWDUST.—“He gathered himself for one mighty effort and shot upward.”

finished in the ring, Burke was at the tent door, waiting for the love-lorn one. As the audience passed out he saw coming toward him a woman as fair as he had ever looked upon, and dressed with elegance and taste.

She smiled a recognition and gave her arm in silence and they walked away from the town, down to where the pearly brooks that poets write of sing their way to swell the river. Thus far neither broke the stillness of the evening time, and they sat themselves down on a mossy knoll, just where the moonbeams stole their way amid the branches of a giant oak.

None but a listener of the tales of love they told could divulge their sweet converse, and the clown was just picturing years of future wedded bliss, when there came a heavy crash through the brush, and the towering form of a man stood boldly forth in the moonlight.

The fair Matilde gave a shriek and exclaimed: “My husband!”

Up sprang the clown, and, with one bound, he sped away, but closely pursued by the enraged husband of the romantic wife.

For a few moments the clown had the advantage, but at last the pursuer, who was fleet of foot, gained perceptibly. Their course lay toward the town, and Burke found himself confronted by a brook of considerable depth and width; but he stopped not. As he neared the edge he gathered himself for one mighty effort and shot upward—throwing a somersault in the air from the force of habit—and landed on the opposite bank, high and dry.

The pursuing and irate husband stood appalled, not daring to make so terrific a jump for fear of landing in the middle of the stream; seeing which the clown and wag as well, cried out:

“You can’t do that, my friend, so don’t try it. Give my love to Matilde, and tell her my advice is never to write love letters to circus clowns.”

In the gray of the morn, outside of the town, Billy Burke crawled on to the pole wagon and rode to the

next stand, closely inspecting every approaching team, fearing that it might contain the husband of the epistolary and indiscreet Matilde.

If Matilde sighed for Burke, the heart of the clown underwent no pangs for his hasty parting from her; his recollections of the event are more ludicrous than otherwise, and he is as susceptible as ever to the melting glances of the beauties who admiringly watch his caperings in the “sawdust.”

THE FAT SKELETON—THE BLOWER'S STORY.

It was a quiet Sunday evening in the early fall, the place, the office of a small country-town tavern, made the more dull and stupid a place than ever by the monotonous drip of rain without. The room was well filled and feebly lighted by an ill-trimmed kerosene lamp; the rubicund faced landlord nodded in his seat upon the high stool behind the desk; a flashily dressed, glib-speaking young man appeared to be the sole spokesman, and his auditors, half residents of the town and the rest strangers, listened attentively and without interruption.

The day and night before, the circus had exhibited there, and the company as well as horses were enjoying a much needed rest. The entertaining Sabbath evening story-teller had the day before bestowed his eloquence upon the crowd while perched upon an end-upturned box at the entrance of a banner-adorned side show adjacent to the great tent, and invited their attention and patronage to the double-headed girl and the Egyptian snake charmer, which he described as handling “bore constructors” with impunity, and holding subject to his will all the venomous reptiles of the earth.

The eloquent advertiser of the side show was in his

element—doing all the talking and none of the listening. The Baron Munchausen might in his day have spun quite a fair yarn, but he would have proved an unequal rival indeed for Blowhard.

After relating remarkable and incredible stories about elephants, lions, and all manner of wild beasts, he finally drifted off to wonderful medical discoveries, remarking by the way, that during his travels in South Africa he frequently saw the Hottentots gathering buchu for Dr. Helmbold, and picking Perry Davis' Pain Killer for the American market.

"I tell you, gents," said the man eloquent, "the most remarkable medical man I ever met in the whole course of my extensive peregrinations, used to sell medicine along with a show that I was traveling with. I was a kid then, and butchered candy in the big show. The doctor was selling corn salve then, and doing a powerful trade at ninepence a lick. Of course you know there is always a set of fellows who hasn't any regard for medical science and full of their pranks, and they put their heads together to play a joke on him. Doc used to stand in a buggy, do his spouting and selling and operating on his patients, and the way he used to take out them corns was a circumstance.

"Well, in this ere town, the name of which I can't just remember, the fellows got hold of a chap that had a patent leg and thought it would be a funny thing to get him to set in the corn doctor's wagon and have the false foot operated upon for corns. Laugh? Why I thought the crowd would burst when the one-legged chap pulled the stocking off that false foot. But the doctor never winced a bit, but applied the salve to the willow and steel foot, just the same as if it had been a natural one.

"The best part of the joke is coming. About a fortnight after the operation in the corn doctor's wagon, the chap got up in the morning as usual, and you can guess how astonished he was when he saw five willow sprouts—one growing out of each toe—the thumb-toe the biggest and the stoutest of them all. You see what caused it was the medicinal qualities of the corn salve acting on the willow wood and forcing it into life. The doctor explained it to me afterwards. The one-legged man was kind of naturally frightened like at first, but he saw through it after a while and broke off the sprouts; but it was no use. As fast as he broke them off in the morning they grewed out at night, just as fast as some of you have seen a pumpkin vine.

"At last he got discouraged and saw that it was no use, and he threw the leg out of the window and it fell down along side of a stream that run close by the house. And on that very spot there stands to-day, in one clump, five of the handsomest weeping willows that I ever set eyes on, and the big toe tree is bigger than any chestnut you've got in these parts."

Upon the completion of this relation a hush fell upon the auditory, disturbed only by the trumpet-like snore of the slumbering laudlord. No one volunteering to question Blowhard's veracity, he ventured to relate further, and resumed:

"That same season we had a side-show along, which had in it a living skeleton and a Sikassian gal, and I

recollect it was doing a pretty strong trade, too. It's human nature to hanker after monstrosities, and people will run after them as they did after that skeleton; he was the leanest specimen of humanity I ever saw—just as fat as a bean pole and twice as graceful. No wonder he was thin—he eat next to nothing. I've known him to live two weeks on one soda cracker, and then one-half of it would mold before it was used.

"The skeleton was what drew the money; but the attraction in that side-show, in my eye, was the Sikassian gal. I'll tell you the truth: she was a rusher if she wasn't Russian, and I'm half a mind to think that she knew more about New Jersey than she did about the dominion of the Czar. She was as handsome as a photograph, and the fellow that run the side-show was "heels over head in love," as the saying is, with her, but he had a rival, which was the very same corn doctor chap of which I have been telling you.



THE FAT SKELETON.—"Five willow sprouts, one growing out of each toe."

"The girl took a liking to both of them, which made the matter worse, and made them each exert himself the more to win her affections.

"Now, science will tell as well in love as in war, and the doctor had too good a head on him to be out-generated by a side-showman. This doctor, you must know, had read books, and knew all about the chemical properties and medicinal qualities of logwood, castor oil and cam-fire gum, and such drug shop stuff. I used to notice that every day he took the living skeleton into a restaurant to dine with him instead of taking his meals at the hotel. He must have doctored the skeleton's food, for all of a sudden he commenced to fatten up in a most remarkable manner, and it wan't but a short time before his cheeks looked as if he'd been blown up with a quill, and folks would growl as they went out of the show and complain of it as a perfect sell, and the fattest and healthiest looking living skeleton they had ever seen.

"The side-showman was in a terrible worry all the

while, for he knew that his show was going to the dogs, and no one could explain the reason of it; for no one but the corn doctor, who was laughing in his sleeve all the while, and grew more attentive to the Sikassian gal as the skeleton grew fatter.

"The side-showman grew cross and mean, and one day when he popped the question to the Sikassian gal she refused him; for she was a sensible gal, and saw from the way that business had been going that his finances were in a mighty weak condition. Well, when he come to get the mitten he just got up and dusted, and we never set eyes on him again, and I've traveled from Maine to Texas myself.

"So the doctor married the Sikassian gal and run the side-show himself summers, and practiced medicine winters. His understanding gave him an immense advantage. One season he'd exhibit the living skeleton as thin as a knife blade, and then during the winter he would fatten up till he weighed about four hundred, and then show him as the fat man. Talk about your doctors—you may believe me or not—but for me, I'd rather have that corn salve of his, for most any complaint you are a mind to name, than a barrel of your patent medicine that sells at a dollar a bottle."

Just here the landlord awoke, and hearing an allusion made to medicine, commenced to relate his rheumatic experience, which occupied the time for the balance of the evening, much to the disgust of the gathering, and more especially the side-show blower.

WITH TIGHTS AND SPANGLES.

With the song of the thrush comes the circus with its glittering street pageant, golden chariots, gaily uniformed bands, and richly caparisoned blooded steeds, to amuse the people of town and country in our northern latitude. In the more congenial clime of the "sunny south" their tents are often spread in the Winter months. It was during one of these campaigns, "way down South in Dixie," in an obscure Georgia town, that I first met the individual to whom I am about to refer. Cotton was "down," a general financial depression was felt throughout the south-land, and there was a pretty close "cutting of cloth" all 'round among the managers and agents to "make both ends meet." With Charles H. Hall, then the advance agent of Laura Keane's Comedy Company, and formerly with Charles MacEvoy's Hibernicon, I called at the railroad office to negotiate reduced rates of fare over the road. The railway official was in close communication with a clerical-looking individual, who I at once took for the pastor of a local church arranging for a Sunday school excursion. He was dressed in solemn black, wore a vest buttoned to his throat, and displayed no jewelry; while meekness and piety seemed to ooze from every pore of his placid countenance. Judge of my surprise when the ministerial stranger recognized Hall, and I was introduced to Andrew Haight, of whom

I had often heard in connection with the firm of Haight & Chambers. Mr. Haight was at this time contracting agent for the Stone & Murray Circus, and I frequently met him thereafter, as we worked our ways over the same lines of road Alabama-ward.

Stone & Murray closed their season immediately after New Year's, and returned to New York to fit out for their northern tour. But Andrew Haight remained and connected himself with "G. G. Grady's Unprecedented Old Fashioned American Circus," until he met with P. B. Wooten, at Atlanta, Ga., and organized the Haight & Wooten Circus, with which he made a forty-six weeks' season, before the termination of which Wooten withdrew from the firm. The Haight & Wooten show started from Atlanta, Ga., but before the Summer was spent, explored the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and, traveling by rail, managed to avoid other parties in the main. At St. John, New Brunswick, Manager Haight, who was in advance himself, called upon the mayor of the town, one Charles Reed, the son of a royal father in the mother country.

"Your honor," said the manager, bowing profoundly and sactimoniously, "we are coming to be with you for a little while, and I have called to consult you in regard to a license."

"Not necessary, sir," interrupted the mayor, at once mistaking the showman for a clergyman. "You are at perfect liberty to preach without a license."

"But I don't want to preach," expostulated Manager Haight.

"Pray, then, what do you want?" interrogated the puzzled official.

"I want," smiled Mr. Haight, benignly, "to secure a license for the Haight & Wooten Circus, who propose to exhibit here with your honor's kind permission."

The mayor waited to hear no more, but broke forth with a hearty laugh at his ludicrous mistake. When the account of the interview was related to the company, it was a question who laughed the loudest and longest, Durand, of the eloquent quill, Jacob Haight, or that great admirer of Byron's Mazeppa, George W. De Haven.

The season of 1871 Stone & Murray, Haight & Wooten, G. G. Grady and some others, sent up hot-air balloons every day, with a venturesome passenger, as an outside attraction to draw the crowd to "the lot." This species of ballooning was much like a display of fireworks—attractive enough for the second, but the moment it was over and the descent made—arousing feelings of disappointment in the beholders, who were wont to enjoy a little growl.

One afternoon, with Stone & Murray, the balloon failed to travel miles into the blue ether, and after reaching a moderate height made a rapid descent, much to the disgust of a Hibernian matron, who exclaimed:

"Fust, and is it going no fudder up than that?"

"Whist," said a sister from the Old Bog, who stood at her side. "How far would you have it go for nothing?"

Another day, an individual who had brought to the ground with him a descriptive programme, in which the air ship was represented in red ink, complained that

the balloon was not the same color as that on the bill. Brilliant in color and capital in design are the mammoth posters spread upon the bill board to attract the eye by the various circus companies and menageries.

During the season it was the delight of Tom Barry, on a Sunday, in a rural burgh, to take a position near a large stand of bills, and listen to the remarks of the bystanders. If the performance had taken place on the preceding Saturday, he heard many a freely spoken comment upon the merits of himself and fellow performers. One day, while eavesdropping, he heard the little group of citizens expressing themselves upon the performance and the performers.

"They did everything on the bills," said one enthusiastic admirer.

"Let's see," proposed another; and with that they commenced to walk the length of the bulletin board, saying as they went:

"They did that," "and that," "and that, too," the clown following carelessly along unnoticed. Stone & Murray had in the stand a "rebus bill," somewhat difficult to decipher, and before this they had paused for some moments in silence, while a shadow grew perceptibly over the face of the hitherto confident youth, who reluctantly and audibly admitted:

"Well, I swow they didn't do that!"

An opinion in which every one coincided, while the clown stole away to enjoy a quiet laugh by himself.

If there ever existed a happy-go-lucky individual, he is embodied in Billy Burke, the clown, ever the same genial fellow; it matters not to him whether the sun shines or is behind a cloud. After returning from his Summer's tour with James Robinson, he played an exceedingly brief engagement with Dan Rice, and afterwards appeared for a few weeks at Lent's, in New York City. The balance of the Winter he lived at his ease—where so many of the profession centre—at the St. Charles Hotel. Among those who dropped in from day to day to chat with a friend, or the managers who were coming or going, was Ben Maginley, a famous jester and equestrian director, of Joel E. Warner & Co's show.

The rotund humorist has a dog, a black, shaggy fellow, that is always at his heels, who soon came to be on familiar terms with the waiters of the restaurant, who fed him as regularly as he appeared. It came to pass that the wicked Burke conspired against the digestion of that there dorg, and daily purloined from the table large quantities of rich cheese and fed it to the purp without the knowledge of his master.

"How's your dog, Ben?" asked Burke from day to day.

"He ain't very well," replied the unsuspecting jester; I think he eats too much."

When his back was turned the dog was again crammed with cheese, while the head waiter could not understand how it was that the patrons of the restaurant, all of a sudden, ate so much cheese with their pie.

What would have been the fate of that dog no one can tell, but fortunately Spring time came, and it became necessary for Burke to join "the show" at St. Louis. When he came to settle the Winter's score he found a



WITH TIGHTS AND SPANGLES.—"How's your dog, Ben?" asked Burke, from day to day.

discrepancy of \$3.50 between his memorandum and the account on the hotel books.

"Let's run them over," suggested book-keeper Warner. Thereupon they commenced running over the items until they came to one in the bold hand of Landlord Leland, which read:

Cheese for Maginley's dog.....\$3.50.

The clown admitted the cheese, as he laughingly exclaimed:

"I wonder which got the worst of it, me or the dog?"

PRATT'S PERPLEXITY.

It was a party of rare spirits, ripe for mischief, who were wont to congregate during the winter of '71 within latitude of the genial warmth of the stove of the Saint

Charles Hotel office. There might have been seen for many a night, until the hours grew small, Billy Burke, Dick Fitzgerald, "the Irish Lord," Frank Gibbons, the ladies' gymnastic pet; Harry Hapgood, late director of the "Bridgeport Minstrels," and former proprietor of the "Great American Hen Show," and my western agent friend, F. C. Pratt, who had the Summer before conducted affairs at the front with "G. G. Grady's Unprecedented Old Fashioned American Circus." Sometimes the Watson Brothers dropped in and spun a yarn of their travels with Haight & Wooten, and all the Winter long there was a coming and going of shining lights in the varied constellations of the amusement world.

Wild were the pranks that the boys played upon each other, and the writer confesses himself a victim to more than one good joke—somewhat practical, to be sure, but none the worse for that. New York was an unread book to friend Pratt, and he turned over a leaf every day to find something of interest to marvel at. When the night sessions came on he was there to explain the extraordinary qualities of his patent shoulder brace, and relate his experiences with "Varney's Dramatic Company" way out toward sundown, and explain what became of a portion of Grady's canvas "Down in a coal mine," in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

"About these days," quoting the almanac, Mr. Gannon opened a side-show on Broadway, near "Murderers' Row," close to the headquarters of "Reddy, the Blacksmith." The several features had been brought down from the Barnum show, which had been exhibiting at the Empire Rink, and consisted of the learned seal, several cages of animals, the sleeping beauty—whose respiration was apparently regulated by a Jerome clock located in the bosom of the recumbent fair one.

Hapgood had related for the ninety-ninth time his version of "that hair dye," and his highly enjoyable associations with the nobility of Great Britain while connected with Rumsey & Newcomb's Minstrels; then, with the artifice and craftiness of a diplomat, he turned the conversation and made the startling announcement that Barnum's learned seal was nothing more nor less than a machine; an absurd statement, at which Pratt exclaimed most warmly, avowing that its promulgator could be little less than an idiot.

At this imputation Hapgood was in high dudgeon, and referred for the confirmation of his statement to every one present, who, with one voice, substantiated every word of what he said, and expressed surprise that Mr. Pratt should be ignorant of a fact so generally known in the profession.

Words raged, and the one-sided discussion became loud and prolonged. It was at last agreed that the matter should be referred to George Guilford, late director of publications of the Bailey show, whom every one knows to be perfectly familiar with every member of the animal kingdom, from a ringtailed monkey to the great behemoth. Thereupon the meeting adjourned until morning.

In the morning the genial Guilford was posted and well prepared to reply to the interrogatories of Pratt. Judge of his surprise when the man of the quill declared that

Barnum had never had a seal in his collection, and that in fact there was but a single one on the continent, and that was the property of "Old" John Robinson. Turning away disgusted, Pratt sought his breakfast, and Guilford dropped down to the side-show and interviewed the doorkeeper, returning before his absence had been noted, and patiently waited for Pratt to finish his repast.

"I say, Pratt," said Guilford, "as you don't seem to believe me, I'll tell you what you can do—come down the street with me, and we'll leave the question to be decided by the doorkeeper; of course you can rely upon what he says in the matter."

Pratt was introduced to the keeper, and was allowed to ask his own questions.

"Well, you see, Mr. Pratt," was the reply, "that is a pretty ticklish question to answer, and it would cost me my position if Barnum got wind of it. The way P. T. got into that clock business, was through this educated seal. He got acquainted with Chauncey Jerome while he was making the parts up in New Haven. You see he is as full of wheels inside as your watch is, and it is probably one of the cutest contrivances ever invented. Barnum has made a power of money out of him, and fools the best of them just as it did you, though it is mighty tedious on the man that turns the crank."

Pratt would hear no more, but turned on his heel and left Guilford and the keeper, fully satisfied in his own mind that they were a couple of incurable lunatics.

Perhaps a week elapsed when the learned seal was again recurred to, and numerous incidents related where-in the wool had been pulled over the eyes of the public.

"Of course you know," said the veracious Hapgood, directing his conversation more particularly to Pratt, "that Tom Hodge's Zip edition of the 'What is it,' is generally believed to be of African blood."

"So it is," interrupted Pratt; "its nothing but a nigger."

"Then I'm one," remarked Hapgood.

"Well, I'm willing to admit that," conceded Pratt.

"I am not much of a hand at betting," continued Hapgood, with a laugh at Pratt's sarcastic sally, "but, since you will be convinced at nothing, I'll bet the oysters for the crowd, and leave it to Tom Hodge himself."

"I'll take that bet," exclaimed Pratt, jumping up.

The bet was made, the statement repeated, and the conversation wandered off into another channel. The next day Hapgood sought Hodge and instructed him how to act his role satisfactorily, and Hodge agreed to be on hand that evening to decide the wager and the nationality of that remarkable nondescript, the "What is it."

Night came, and Hapgood guided Pratt to that popular resort of the wearers of tights and spangles, kept by Lafe Nixon, where Hodge was found perusing the evening paper.

After chatting a while about the news of the day, the state of the weather, and the business that was being done by the "flat foot party" at the Grand Opera House, by Barnum at the rink, and the veteran Lent, at his old quarters in Fourteenth street, Hapgood approached the

subject by allusions to some of Hodge's experiences in the past.

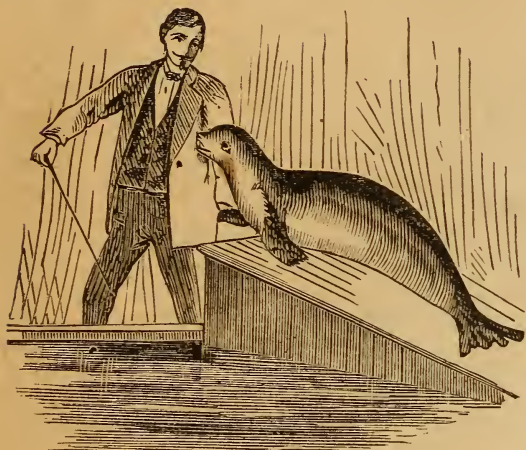
"Let me ask you one question?" queried the impatient Pratt, anxious to win the oysters.

"Certainly," answered the agreeable Hodge.

"Is Zip a nigger or not?"

At this question every one laughed uproariously, and loudest of all laughed Hodge.

"Oh, I thought you knew all about that," returned Hodge. "I'm telling this to you not to go any further, for of course there are little secrets in the profession which every one shouldn't know, and are not to be blabbed on every corner."



PRATT'S PERPLEXITY.—"The Learned Seal."

Every one was attention, and Pratt hitched impatiently about, while Hodge pulled away quietly at his cigar. After quite a pause, he said:

"Between you and me, Pratt, Zip is white, and we black him up twice a day."

"It's a lie, a thundering lie," shouted Pratt, "and you are worse idiots than the 'What is it,' the whole pack of you."

Oysters were now in order, and the boys immediately began to "nominate their choice," while Pratt protested in vain that he had not lost the wager, and that it was a "put up job." Mr. Hodge was overwhelmed at this sweeping denunciation, and called upon good-natured Charley Pell to bear witness to his truth and veracity.

Soon the oysters came smoking on the table, and Pratt inquired if there was not some gentleman present who would oblige by convincing him that the bivalves before him were "clams," and it was his earnest hope that they would produce in every partaker thereof the most dreadful results of colic and night-mare combined. But nothing of the kind was visited upon the wretches, for they enjoyed the repast hugely, smacked their lips thereat, and said "good!"

"I would recommend to you all," said Pratt, "a pair of my patent shoulder braces—they are very useful in making crooked ways straight, though I fear that a gross piece would hardly make you capable of telling the truth."

Being called upon to explain the mechanism of his patent brace, he demonstrated it upon the margin of a newspaper by a pencil drawing, which was passed around and critically examined by all, who exclaimed in almost one voice:

"Did you get a patent on that? Why, I saw the same thing when I was a boy."

"Now, boys," protested Pratt, "I am willing to believe for your sakes that negroes are white and that seals are run on the same principle as hand organs, but I know one thing—I invented that shoulder brace, and I'm going to get out of this confounded show business right away, and make a fortune out of it."

"Now you may think," exclaimed Hapgood, "that you invented them braces, but they were originated years ago, and I'll bet you another oyster supper that Uncle John Tryon and Joe Pentland wore them before you was born."

Pratt hesitated for a moment and then exclaimed, amid shouts of laughter, that went around the table:

"But who will you leave it to?"

THE ELEPHANT KEEPER'S STORY.

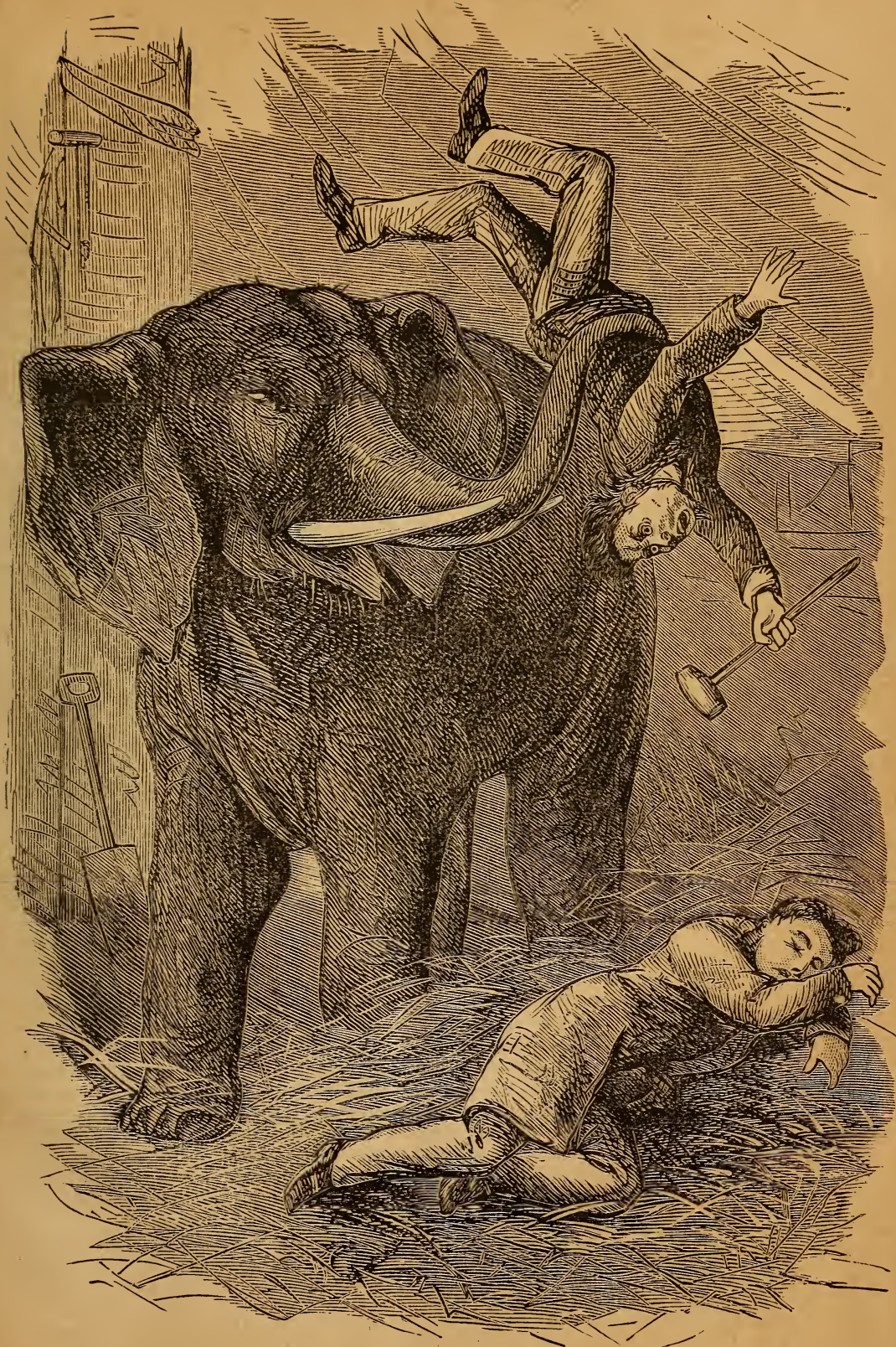
"Am I a showman?" Well, yes; should reckon I was. Ben in the business goin' on these forty years; never a day in the nigger minstrel line or theatre acting, but always in the legitmate. 'Legitmate?' what's that? Why the circus and the caravan.

"How did I commence?" As a kid, stranger. You see I wasn't limber and spry, and wouldn't never make a tumbler or a rider, and I was too demycratic in my politics to black myself up for a nigger in the side-show. I allers was a remarkably musical child, and could tell 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Hail Columbia' the minute they fided and drummed them general training days.

"My first season I ground out music on the organ in the side-show, helped put up and take down the tent, sold candy and peanuts on the seats in the big show, and drove the side-show team from one stand to t'other. I think if I'd gin my 'tention to the oprey when I was a young 'un I would have made a hit; next season I pounded the big drum in the band; and Sam Long, the clown, what's got to be a vet'ran now, told me one day that I was the sweetest base drummer he ever heard in all his days.

"Sam used to sing, 'I stand before you once't again; then just as he does to-day; I recollects lots of them old fellows, and if I could write like some of them chaps that lies like all possessed in the papers an' the bills, I'd make a book like Barnum's, only a much sight larger. When them printer men was gittin' up that twelve sheet elephant bill, you see over yonder, I dropped inter give the pints of the animal to the artist; an' the boss sez ter me: 'When you write that book, I'll get up the picturs for you.'

"I never had the gift of gab, or else I might have been



THE ELEPHANT KEEPER'S STORY.—“Quicker than lightnen he throwed up his trunk and mashed the murderin' devil into atoms.”

a side-show blower, which is more remoonerative than driving baggage wagons. But since I've got so old I a'nt so ambitious as I used to be, and am pretty content to be an elephant keeper. 'Praps you doesn't know the 'stinguished serciety that I meets in my travels with the great moral show. You'd be 'stonished to hear how larned I talk to the ministers and lawyers and the college folks; fact, stranger, I've got in sech a habit of lying that its hard work to tell the truth.

"When they asks me if I have been in Africa, I says yes, an' I tells them that I was intermately 'quainted with DuChally and Dr. Livingstone, an' they swallers every word of it. I don't think anything could indoose me to go into that country, for I'm dead set agen niggers, Toni Hodges, 'Zip,' an' all the rest; fact, wouldn't let a black barber shave me more'n I would that big baboon over in that cage t'other side.

"How did I come to be an elephant keeper?—that was what I started to tell you, but I've got such a habit of going round, that it allers takes me more or less time to come ter the pint. You know that it is not every bridge that will bear up the weight of a heavy old feller like him, an' then, in consequence, you has ter go roun. Now, what I is a going to tell you is true; I isn't no newspaper editor or show agent what it is impossible to tell the truth. I never lies, 'cept in a professional way, an' then its because it seems to give so much satisfaction.

"My memory isn't good as ter figgers, and I never kept a dairy to sot things down in; 'twas considerable many years ago at any rate; that season I recollect I was driving the pole wagon, an' a right mean job it was, too, poking along through a strange country and making long drives. We had this same elephant then, an' I suppose if the truth was known he's as much if not more'n a hundred years old. Jasper Birch was his keeper then, and a right smart chap he was; he writ a beautiful hand and spoke like a legislature, an' I tell you he knew what he was talkin' 'bout, he did; his head was as full of larning as a dictionary.

"Our principal woman rider that season was the old man's prentice, Evaline; that's all they called her; if she had any other name I never heered it. She was a young an' handsome thing, an' the boss sot more on her than everything in the world; even the performing lions or the old elephant, by which he set great store. There wasn't a single feller in that company but what set his cap for the riding gal. Ride! why she could ride a storm; I never seen anything equal it afore or sence. I ain't ashamed to say, stranger, that I was kind of soft that way myself, an' once I came near turning pole wagon and all upside down over an embankment jest because I was thinkin' of her. It was strange, but there's never no 'counting for a woman's love, and she seemed to think a heap more of Jasper Birch than all the rest; he wasn't no common fellow like me; he warn't no more like me than I'm like George Washington.

"Jim Blood was our boss canvas man that same season. He was a mean, ugly critter, an' his name oughter ben Badblood, as you will diskiver before I get through with this yarn. I am a scholard to what that chap was; I don't bieve he knew A from Z, an' come to recollect I

read the programme the very week we started out. Poor Doctor Jones writ that bill. Didn't know him? Sorry; will show you that bill if you want; got one in my verlise at the tavern.

"He was mad in love with Evaline, the riding gal, an' of course she didn't care a pin for the great brute; how could she? Jim Blood was a surly chap, an' at times he dranked—licker is a bad thing; it riles up the evil natur in a man; I spose because he loved the gal so an' he didn't receive any incouragement he dranked more. If I keep on talkin' in this way I'll be off the turnpike and taking a side road. One night, it was just after the big show, Jim Blood was bileing with drink and had been sour an' cross-like all day. I reckerlect he giv the old man sass that day; I never heered him do it afore, but he was a vallereble man an' the boss said nothin.

"Jasper Birch laid down by the side of the elephant in the soft hay, to get a little snooze before making an early start for the next stand. Jim Blood saw him fast asleep, an' it put murder in his heart. He went and got his sledge and crept up close to where Jasper lay sleeping. True, stranger, every word I'm telling you. Jim Blood was a powerful, strong fellow, an' had almost as much muscle as the cannon-ball performer. He stood right over Jasper Birch a minute, to make sure an' sartin of his blow, an' then he swung the sledge right up inter the air. A second more and the elephant keeper would have been a dead man.

"The old elephant saw it, an' quicker than lightnen he throwed up his trunk and mashed the murderin' devil into atoms. Why, he nigh onto broke every bone in his body.

"Every night Evaline used to run out of the dressing-room an' bid Jasper good night before he started on his travel to the next town, an' she seen the hull on it. * * Sakes me! its getting late, an' I must be starting. There was a crowner's jury sot, an' the verdict was—'James Blood came to his death by gittin' hit of an elephant's trunk.' They exonerated the elephant, and at the same time said that circusses an' menageries were a very on moral thing.

"It want long after that 'fore Jasper and Evaline were married, and that was the last season they traveled. When I was in York I saw his store with his name in gold over the door. He saw me staring in the windows an' come out an' pulled me in, an' I went up an' tuk dinner wid him an' Evaline; sech grub an' sech fixins' I never saw; she's a real lady, an' never put on no more airs than when she used to jump through the balloons and over the banners. They asked me a thousand questions about the old elephant, and wished that they had a photograph of him. I recollect—that, and the next day I went down to Sammy Booth's an' got a twelve sheet bill of the old elephant, an' tuk it up ter her an' him, an' they was dreful tickled.

"Jasper wanted me to come and porter about his store, but I told him I was much obliged, I didn't believe I'd make much of a fist in mercantile life, and I'd stick to his old friend, the elephant.

"Good by, stranger, good by; I've got a long road ahead an' have got to leave the pike an' take the by-road.

Why don't these slack-men an' crowners that says circuses an' menageries is onmoral make their bridges safe an' not go to riskin' a feller's life. Good by stranger, good by."

Elephant and driver disappeared in a cloud of dust in a very few moments, but his voice could be heard for some time, urging forward the massive beast with his cheery "mile up, mile up!"

ANCIENT & MODERN TROUBADOURS.

It would be a wide stretch of the imagination, indeed, to see in the persons of the sturdy hand organist and his female companion the romantic troubadours of the age of chivalry, — to picture in him Gaucelen Faudit, who paid court to Mary of Ventadour, the reigning beauty of Auvergne and the Limousin, and who was a follower of Cœur de Leon. Neither is she who thumps the tambourine so vigorously and unmusically a counterpart of Guglielma Monia of Soliers, a lady of noble birth, who sang like a bird and was as beautiful as a dream. Our modern troubadour has an extra attraction in the shape of an educated monkey, or some comical mechanical figures, as obedient to the wire-pulling of the operator as the voter to the bidding of the politician.

Prominent among those who traverse the land to make the open air vocal with sweet sounds, and quite as popular with the people, are the nostrum venders, who extol their remedies with eloquent tongue, and poetically and musically sing their virtues and renown. Sometimes standing upon a box, conveniently placed at a prominent street corner, to the harmonious "trum, trum" of the banjo; and again in a gorgeously painted and elaborately gilded and decorated vehicle, drawn by high mettled chargers, wherein a quintet in turn sing, eulogise and lecture upon the merits and pain-relieving qualities of their cure-alls. It requires a degree of "cheek" to stand up in the highway and sing and talk to the multitude, and be ready with good natured repartee to the smart remarks of the crowd.

A popular minstrel I knew of, but whose name I withhold on account of his "high connections," once returned from a tour as unsatisfactory in its results as that of Gaucelen Faudit's to the Levant. It was in the summertime—the local minstrel bands were touring it in the country, and in the variety theatres all was silent and deserted.

Opportunately, as it were, "Old Hickory" Slauson—who once did juggle programmes with LaRue's Minstrels in the days of that company's prosperity, when it numbered "twenty-four artists," and was piloted by Charles B. Griste—dropped into Gotham from up the Hudson, in search of talent. Old Hickory had become a troubadour, having retired from the show business since his memorable campaign with "S. O. Wheeler's Circus," and "solidified perfume" was the article in praise of which he sang and picked the banjo.

Having prospered as an itinerant vender, and wishing to preserve a voice—perhaps originally designed for the opera—he sought a vocalist and manipulator of the African harp, and our friend he found, and for several days he was missed from our circle. Broadway knew him no more; and up the river which Hudson sailed, in its pleasant little cities, orated and tunelessly woke the banjo in the interest of "solidified perfume." "Old Hickory" and the minstrel. The latter was ill at ease, fearful of recognition, but the position was preferable to following an over-worked lunch route, therefore he continued on, although no Guglielma Monia was enticed by his dulcet notes to leave the convent's walls and follow his fortunes. Better days have come to the minstrel since then, but "Old Hickory" is still eloquent for solidified perfumes.

A genius in the medicine line is Tom Jackson, known far and near as "Bloody Tom." Tom had long followed circuses and menageries, disposing of corn-cures and other relievers of human ills, but the triumph of his genius was in the discovery of "Sealoleum."

Dropping into a saloon one day, to partake of a little stimulant, Tom saw on exhibition, in a tank of water, a live seal. "Here" reasoned Jackson within himself, "is an attraction that discounts a wagon-load of musicians and singers." The proprietor of the establishment was interviewed, a bargain struck, and "Bloody Tom" became the proprietor of the seal. Out of his treasures he fished a pamphlet describing the habits of the animals to be found in a popular menagerie, and "read up" in regard to the seal, preparatory to holdin' forth to the public.

As the medicine-man conjectured, the bait took; the amphibious native of the Arctic clime attracted the crowd, and Tom and his assistant waxed eloquent over the newly discovered cure for pain. As at the menagerie, the special attraction was the feeding lions. It was announced from time to time that the multitude might be induced to wait or return to witness the delegate from Alaska eating his fish. Everybody with an ache or pain bought "Sealoleum," and others bought it to "keep in the house," against a time of need. "Bloody Tom," like Gaucelen Faudit in the days of his prosperity, waxed fat, saucy and indolent.

One day I came upon him near the market, in Charleston, S. C. It was the same seal, the identical Jackson, but somewhat changed in outward appearance. He looked more like Gaucelen Faudit after his return from Palestine than the successful inventor of a great panacea. Slipping away from the crowd and leaving his assistant to continue the sale and praise of "Sealoleum," he walked a little away and said:

"Things have been going a little queer lately; you know when I am making money I spend it; you can't keep your cake and eat it too, and, just my luck, everything has been going the wrong way since I struck the southern country. In the first place, there has been no end of licenses to town, county and state, and every time I see an official-looking chap coming this way I immediately pull out my pocket-book and ask him 'how much it is?'"

"A long while ago, I put the manufacture of the medicine into the hands of a firm, for I found it a bother and a waste of time to putter with putting it up myself. Just

as I was getting into the hole, and mighty hard up, along comes a batch here, C. O. D. for the whole bill, which took every cent I could scrape, and, just as if that warn't enough, they had altered the prescription to suit themselves, and—and just look at that!" holding out his great hands, indelibly stained a chrome yellow color.

"Now who is there," asked Tom, "that's agoin' ter git up and be operated on when they see our hands stained like that? Why, even the niggers kick agin it, and they will make the greatest squeal for a little pain as any people I knows on. I have got another batch ordered to Savannah, made 'cordin' to the old recipe, and if I could only raise the wind to get out of here, I know Dan Mac Connell would see me right over there about the licenses and getting the stuff out of the express office."

"Bloody Tom" was silent for a moment, and then he said, hesitatingly:

"I was never in a fix that I didn't get out of yet. I know it's a good deal to ask you, but I have got an idea in my head that will take me out of Charleston. You know I used to follow the circuses and sell corn-salve. Now if you will just go round the corner here, with me, to the office of the *Sunday Times*, and tell Joe DeLano that you will be responsible for a thousand small bills, I will put on this market to-morrow morning a "Concentrated Sealoleum," which shall remove corns, and if that fails me, why let Joe DeLano, the landlord and you draw cuts to see who shall own the seal."

Who could have the heart to refuse so inventive and persistent a genius? Before night the bills were off the press, and that night, at his room in the Pavilion, "Bloody Tom" prepared his new-named remedy.

About noon, curiosity led me down Meeting-street, and there, on the corner, was the "great medicine man" taking out the corns and pulling in the quarters. Amid the crowd, admiring the impudence and cleverness of the shrewd Yankee, stood Joe Jefferson, the famous comedian, who was spending a day or two at the Charleston Hotel, near by. No sooner had he turned his back and passed out of hearing than "Bloody Tom" exclaimed:

"Ladies and gentlemen, there has just left this crowd the famous comedian, Joe Jefferson; he highly recommended Sealoleum, both in its liquid and concentrated form. He could not play 'Rip Van Winkle' without it; and if there is any one here that doubts my word, go round to the Academy of Music and ask Laura Keene what she thinks, and I assure you her answer will be, 'I would not be without it for the world.'"

Then followed a rush of the fifteenth amendment element, who passed up their quarters at a lively rate. Leaving the assistant to take the stamps, Tom withdrew, beckoning me to follow, and stopped a little distance off to show Joe DeLano's receipt for the printing.

Tom reached Savannah in due time, and I saw him there dispensing "Sealoleum," remarking, *sotto voce*, as he addressed the mixed gathering, "the concentrated in case of an emergency."

For what I know, he is still singing in city and hamlet the virtues of his life-preserving and health-promoting remedy.

THE FLYING MAN.

THE BOSS CANVASMAN'S STORY.

"AM I the manager? Well, that is a joke. Me the manager! Look at that hand: better for swinging a sledge than wearing kid gloves. I'm the boss canvasman, Sir. I don't brag, but they do say there's no better in the business. Ask O'Brien, Frepaugh, Murray, or any of 'em.

"Good show? Yes, Sir; that is to say, good for now-a-days—something of an old foggy, Sir, like all the rest of the old fellows. Good Clown, you say? Well, no—not to my liking; too feared of spiling his clothes. I like to see a fellow what tumbles 'round the ring and makes the people holler. My 'pinion is—and I give my 'pinion for what it may be worth—that if these Shakespearian jesters keeps on, the next thing we knows on will be Edwin Booth spouting Hamlet in the ring.



THE FLYING MAN.—"He sailed right up in the air."

"Praps you may be right about that; I guess, on the whole, the up-in-the-air business has improved; but, tush, its nothin' to what I seen oncet with my own eyes.

"Mind tellin' you? Oh no, I'm not busy now; I never have told this story but oncet before, and then I got laughed at for my pains, but seemins you are in arnest about it, I'll tell you.

"She was a fernambulist—that is, she walked a tight-rope clean from the ground to the top of the tent, and danced on a rope in the show. She was Spanish, an' her eyes were black as night, an' there was more than seven devils in them, as any one could see. We never knew much about her; but I heered as how she was married oncet an' hated her husband like pizen, an' one windy day she let drop her balancing-pole an' it dashed out his brains. It were accidental, in course, they said.

"I hate a wicked woman more nor a snake, I do; an' if some day she'd capsized and broke her miserable neck

I shouldn't have cried a cry. We had a young tumbler and gymnast in the company; he was a splendid feller, blonde—like Lidy Thompson—and curly haired; he came from Astley's, and was as smart as a cricket. He was dead in love with the tight-rope walker, but she didn't care a pin for him, and it made me feel sorry to see him carrying himself on so a wasteing his 'fections on a wicked woman.

"One day, after the afternoon performance, I happened to be about the canvas, and hearing voices, and being curious-like, I peeped into the dressing-room. All the performers had gone 'cept the Spanish woman and the gymnast. It made my blood bile when I heered him tell her that he loved her, and I felt just like hitting him with a sledge when he dropped on his knees, right there, and begged her to marry him—and she refused him.

"I thought his heart would break. After a little while I heard her say, in broken Spanish—she didn't speak good English, you see—that if he would fly like a bird she would marry him. How wicked she looked out of them dreadful eyes as she said that. He said that he would, or he would die. Weeks and months he practiced; no sooner were the canvas up in town than he was in the ring, and nights after the show I would keep the canvas up for him half an hour, that he might show the Spanish woman how he progressed. Everybody in the company wondered at his ambition, but you see there was only three of us that knew the secret; at last he made me his confidant, and told me just what I already knew.

"One day he comes to me an' sez, 'I can do it; to-night I'll show you.' Thinks I to myself, young man, you're gone in the upper story, certing. After the performance, that afternoon, I went up town an' stopped into a coffin shop; the undertaker asked me if I had lost a friend; I told him no, but, says I, confidential-like, I expect there'll be a first-class funeral in this town in less than twenty-four hours. That was the long-windedest performance that night I ever seed. I thought it would never come to an end, and when it was over the people were for ever getting out of the canvas.

"After awhile the canvas was empty, an' there was no one left inside but me, Frank, and the Spanish woman; the moon shone outside and we had a lantern inside, so that it was entirely dark in the tent.

"Frank had a laugh all round his face, and the Spanish woman bit her teeth clean into her lips, and I could see that she trembled like. We were going to show in the same town next day, and the seats were left standing. Frank run up on the top seat as spry as a squirrel; when he got there he turned round and kissed his hands to us, an' then he jumped right up into the air. I shut my eyes, instinctive-like, and she clung to my arm and trembled like a leaf.

"When I opened my eyes again he was way up in the air, flying about the centre-pole just like any bird; then he would shoot down, head first, almost to the ground, and then sweep up to the top of the canvas. It made me sick and dizzy-like to look at him, and she covered up her eyes with her hands. By an' by he lit down beside us, and took her hand in both of his and asked:

"Are you satisfied?" She gazed like, and set her

fingers into my arms until they were black and blue for weeks.

"No, no," she said, 'it is a deception; you could not do it outside the tent!'

"He smiled like, and said he, 'Come out-side, I will show you;' and we three went out in the moonlight. It was beautiful like, and I shall never, never forget that night if I lived a hundred years. He went upon the seat of a baggage wagon at the end of the lot; we stood under a big tree, which made a dark shade like, but I could see that her face was white like a corpse, and there was not a speck of blood in her lips. Frank gave a whoop, and then he sailed right up into the air like a balloon; three times he flew about the flag that flew on the centre pole, and then he turned and lit right in front of where we stood.

"Do you believe it now?" asked Frank. She couldn't speak; her teeth was set like; he reached out his hand to take one of hers; she drew back close to me and said: 'Keep back! keep back! Don't touch me! I don't love you!'

"He looked sad like and said nothing, while his chest heaved powerfully. Just that minute I happened to think I had a letter in my pocket for him. I had got it at the post-office on my way to the canvas to supper, and had forgotten to give it to him. When the postmaster gave it to me, I did not notice that it was in mourning; but as I took it from my pocket then I saw that the envelope was mourning edged, and covered with post marks and a foreign stamp. When Frank saw it he said 'Death!'—terrible, terrible solemn like, and his fingers trembled as he opened it.

"He stepped into the light of the moon and read it to himself. It was plain writ and in bold black hand.

"Sad news this," said he, 'my father is dead. We were stranged years ago; the story is a secret of my own; this is from his solicitor to say all his estate—he was rich—is left to me.'

"When he said this, she pulled away from me and threw her arms about his neck: slowly he untwined them and pushed her from him, saying, 'You do not love me—I hate you now!'

"She would have fallen to the ground had I not have caught her. 'Look! look!' said Frank, frightened like; and I saw oozing from her set white teeth a streak of blood and froth.

"Poor thing," said he; and he pitied her, for he had a good heart in him, he did. She died in my arms, there, with the moon shining right in her white face. We carried her to the hotel, and there was a great commotion. The doctor said that she died of a bursting of a blood-vessel, superinduced by violent exercise on the tight-rope; and afterwards he printed a pam'flet on the onhealthiness of rope walking.

"To my thinking, it was her bad heart that broke.

"What become of the flying man? He went back to England, and I never heard of him again. I calkerlate he is a dook or a lord there. If he hadn't been of sech blood he'd made his fortune as the Flying Man."

THE ONE-MAN SHOW.

In the amusement world we may term the popular lecture the one-man show. At the same time, some of the most popular stars in the lecture field are of the gentler sex, and of some of the more advanced progressionists and advocates of women's rights the gender might be omitted without offence. The traveling phrenologist, who holds forth in country school-houses and church basements, and the worn-out divine who prates learnedly of lands and people whom he never saw, gain a living in a more uncertain and precarious way than their fellow-showmen. The admission being "free," the amount of receipts depends entirely upon the generosity of the hearers when the deacons and the selectmen pass round the tile. Among the "successful people," as Olive Logan would call them, are to be named the cold-water hero, Gough, the eloquent Beecher, the fair Dickinson, the sable Douglas, the humorous Twain, and the lamented Artemus Ward.

The lecturer and lecturess have their intelligence office, the same as the actor, the minstrel, and the acrobat have theirs in the dramatic agency. The "Bureau" fills the time for the people who are willing to enlighten the world for sums varying from fifty to one hundred and fifty dollars per night. But there is a lack of *drawers* in that "Bureau," and far too many sticks in its construction. It is to satisfy a morbid curiosity that many are elevated to the rostrum. The people flock to the public hall or church to see the author of "The Leaping Frog," and find themselves amused by the funny Mark Twain. They don't care a snap for the readings of Harriet Beecher Stowe, but wish to gaze upon the authoress of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Barnum is looked upon as a greater curiosity than the mermaid or the "What Is It," while he tells some sound truths about "making money."

Often the patron of the one-man show is doomed to bitter disappointment. A Holland reads a dry dissertation, an hour and a half long, with his nose pinned close to his MSS., while the audience slumbers through the homily. No sooner does an individual obtain a little notoriety as a humorous writer than he becomes a comic lecturer. Josh Billings has written many a quaint truth and tickled thousands into laughter with his pen, but when he comes to peddle his "Milk," or "Putty and Varnish" to an audience he is the most solemn of funny men; the putty fails to stick, the varnish is without gloss, and the milk very watery and chalky. The gift to gab entertainingly is given to but few, and, as is usually the case, is more than equally distributed among the fairer portion of creation. Olive Logan and Annie Dickinson tattle charmingly; but the latter will persist in dragging in politics, which have no more business in a woman's mouth than navy plug-tobacco.

The stage, the rostrum and literature are oft the refuge of unsuccessful people—a sort of asylum or hospital for those who, being at their wits' end, haunt managers, fill the waste-baskets of editors, and blat their crudities be-

fore literary associations, when opportunity offers. Defunct actors and actresses "read" after they have outlived their popularity and usefulness in "holding the mirror up to nature," instead of retiring upon the laurels of the past.

The most successful and entertaining one-man show ever given in America was by Artemus Ward. Whether in the lectures, "Sixty Minutes in Africa" and "The Ghosts," or in describing his panorama, he may be remembered as "the funniest of them all." Poor Artemus sleeps, but the recollections of his humors and comical conceits survive him. He was the wit, the humorist, the jester, and the minstrel end-man combined in one. He was alive with uncontrollable, mischievous fun, that granted him a full pardon for his shocking attacks upon the English tongue. His madcap pranks have not half been told, for many of them are in the keeping of his minstrel friends, with whom he loved so well to associate. E. P. Hingston has happily sketched his career in the "Genial Showman," and John P. Smith, long his agent and companion, could well prepare a second volume.

Agent and manager were well matched in Ward and Smith. John P. was and is a most excellent story-teller, possessing an inexhaustible supply of incident and fact in connection with minstrelsy in its earlier days. Artemus' finances were none of the best when Smith started out to pilot him, for the humorist was too free in his nature to be overburdened with lucre; but Fortune, fickle jade, smiled upon them, and they journeyed westward, winning both dollars and additional fame. The "show" was announced for Cincinnati, and John P. returned to Porkopolis to meet the man with the "wax figgers" and consult as to the movements of the future. Business was satisfactory, and Artemus, in his best humor, fairly outdid himself in his eccentric sayings. All Cincinnati was in a state of chronic cackination, and it was impossible during Ward's engagement for the undertakers to fulfil their necessary engagements with the required gravity. The stingiest of parents became over-generous, and but for the termination of the "lecturs" would have increased the juvenile mortality by too free indulgence in confectionery.

Artemus was so well satisfied with himself that he allowed Smith to relate again and again all his standard reminiscences of the Christys, Charley White, Kunkle, and himself, but all the while the wicked wag was watching his opportunity to punish his agent for the infliction. One night, returning from Mozart Hall at the conclusion of the lecture, John P. began to relate an anecdote of Tony Hernandez, the genius of pantomime, when he was interrupted by Artemus, who said, pointing to a broad-shouldered chap, of the plug-ugly order, who sat straddle of a fire-plug on the opposite corner:

"John, can you whip that fellow?"

"Oh, yes!" answered John, with a laugh, not imagining what was to follow.

"I say," called the lecturer to the muscular idler on the fire-plug, "if you want a head put on you, come over here."

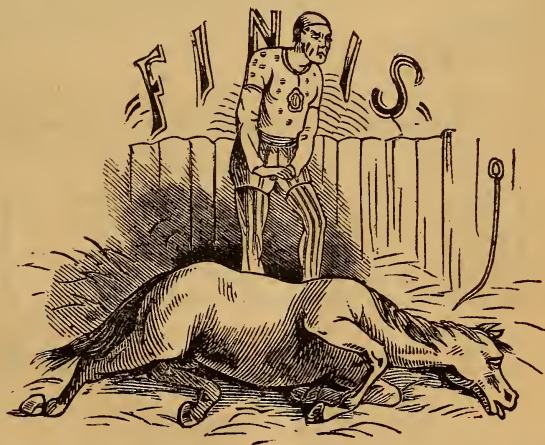
The muscular stranger needed no second invitation, but made a break for the humorist and the agent, at the

same time making use of a profane expletive. Down the street at a tearing rate fled the "wax-figger man," while the "best blood in Virginia, in a direct line from Pocahontas," did his level best in trying to keep up with the long legs of Artemus. Behind them, snorting vengeance, pursued the heavy-going bruiser, who, had he caught the pair, would have given them such a thumping that they would ever recollect. Ward and Smith were too nimble of foot to be overtaken, and soon distanced the irate and insulted follower, plunging, when once out of sight, into a basement coffee-and-cake saloon, of which a venerable negro dame was the proprietress. Artemus was fairly exploding in a perfect agony of suppressed laughter, while Smith was puffing, blowing and wheezing from the violence of his forced exertion, and wishing his rascally employer well pummeled for his outrageous trick.

For some time the culprits kept cover, not daring to venture forth, but after a while they mustered courage enough to crawl up the steps and dive into the first passing carriage, which landed them safely at the hotel. John thanked his stars when he left Cincinnati behind him, and once more went ahead to announce the coming

of a man, the like of whom there never was before and never will be again. Other humorists may imitate his style, and create a smile by the misspelling of a word, a chance story or poem may bring them into notoriety enough to make them a short-lived attraction upon the rostrum; but who is there to replace the greatest of the "cap and bells?"

His keen sense of the ludicrous and ridiculous, and his inimitable way of putting things won him a reputation that took him from the local's desk of the *Cleveland Plain-dealer* to the editorial chair of *Vanity Fair*. But, as he would have himself expressed it, "still he was not happy." Artemus Ward was ill placed as a maker of fun to order; his fun was not to be manufactured at a publishers bidding. His happiest sayings and writings came unbidden during intercourse with hail-fellows and the leisure-moment inspirations of the drudge-work of a writer upon a local journal. The liveliest and most permanent recollection of Artemus Ward will be that he was, all-in-all, the greatest of the what I am pleased to term ONE-MAN SHOWS.



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